

Gorgias

DRAMATIS PERSONAE: CALLICLES, SOCRATES, CHAEREPHON, GORGias,
POLUS

447a CALLICLES:¹ In war and battle, they say, one must take part in this manner, Socrates.²

SOCRATES: Oh, so have we then come, as the saying goes, after the feast, and too late?³

CAL.: Yes, and a very urbane feast indeed; for Gorgias just a little while ago made a display for us of many fine things.⁴

1. Concerning Callicles, a young man near the beginning of his political career (see 515a), no record survives beyond what appears here. For this reason, many surmise that he may be one of the Platonic dialogues' relatively few fictitious characters. His name suggests beautiful fame or fame for beauty (see comment on *kalos* in note 4). Contradictory indications, unusual for Plato, make it impossible to determine a dramatic date for this dialogue: see most notably 470d and 503c and notes there.

2. The very first word of this dialogue on rhetoric is *war*.

3. Socrates evokes some Greek proverb that reminds the English reader of Falstaff's lines at the end of scene 2, act 4 of *The First Part of King Henry IV*: "To the latter end of a fray and the beginning of a feast / Fits a dull fighter and a keen guest."

4. The extant remains of Gorgias's speeches are mainly display or show pieces, what Aristotle calls epideictic rhetoric (also often called ceremonial). In the subsequent search for a definition of rhetoric, Socrates steers Gorgias away from epideictic toward political (or deliberative) and above all toward forensic rhetoric (to use Aristotle's terms again). Gorgias, a citizen of Leontini, about fourteen years older than Socrates, was one of the most famous teachers of rhetoric. Meno in Plato's dialogue of that name praises Gorgias for eschewing any claim to teach virtue (95c). Socrates names Gorgias as one of three examples of itinerant educators of the young in the *Apology* (19e).

The adjective *kalos* has the basic meaning "beautiful," with a wide range of meanings including "fine" and "noble." I have used all three in different contexts. (In the *Phaedrus* I

SOC.: For this, Callicles, Chaerephon⁵ here is to blame, since he forced us to fritter our time away in the agora.

447b CHAEREPHON: No matter, Socrates; for I shall cure it too. For Gorgias is a friend of mine, so that he will make a display for us now, if that seems good, or afterwards, if you wish.

CAL.: What's this, Chaerephon? Does Socrates desire to listen to Gorgias?

CHAE.: We are here for just this very purpose.

CAL.: Well then, whenever you wish to come over to my place—for Gorgias is staying with me and will make a display for you.

SOC.: What you say is good, Callicles. But then, would he be willing
447c to talk with us?⁶ For I wish to learn from him what the power of the man's art⁷ is, and what it is that he professes and teaches. As for the other thing, the display, let him put it off until afterwards, as you are saying.

CAL.: There's nothing like asking the man himself, Socrates. And indeed this was one aspect of his display; just now at any rate he was calling upon anyone of those inside to ask whatever he might wish, and he said he would answer everything.

SOC.: What you say is fine indeed. Chaerephon, ask him!

CHAE.: What shall I ask?

447d SOC.: Who he is.

CHAE.: How do you mean that?

SOC.: Just as if he happened to be a craftsman of shoes, he would answer you, I suppose, "a cobbler." Or don't you understand what I'm saying?

CHAE.: I understand and I'll ask. Tell me, Gorgias, is what Callicles

have done likewise, but there I use "beautiful" wherever possible.) Another word that means "noble," *gennaïos*, I have rendered "nobly born," to distinguish from "noble" meaning *kalos* and to emphasize its etymological connection with birth, generation, descent.

5. Chaerephon is depicted by Aristophanes as Socrates' chief sidekick in the *Clouds*, and Plato has Socrates in the *Apology* relate that the impulsive, democratic Chaerephon inquired of the Delphic oracle whether there was anyone wiser than Socrates.

6. *Dialegethai*, to converse, discuss, talk with, occurs here for the first time. It is related to *dialogos* (discussion, conversation, dialogue), to *dialektikos* (conversational, dialectical), etc., all which become themes of discussion later on, especially (as here) in comparison with rhetoric.

7. The Greek *technē* covers a broad range of meanings: art, skill, knowledge, craft, any ordered and teachable body of knowledge (productive, practical, or, sometimes, theoretical). The criteria for an art are discussed later, as in several places in Plato's dialogues. The word "man" here is the emphatically male *anēr*, not the more generic *anthrōpos*, which I have translated "human being" when possible.

here says true, that you profess to answer whatever anyone asks you?

448a GORGAS: True, Chaerephon. I was just now making exactly those professions; and I say that no one has yet asked me anything new for many years.

CHAE.: Then doubtless you answer easily, Gorgias.

GOR.: You may test this by experiment, Chaerephon.

POLUS:⁸ By Zeus, Chaerephon, test me, if you wish! For Gorgias seems to me to be tired out indeed, for he has just gone through many things.

CHAE.: What, Polus? Do you think you'll give finer answers than Gorgias?

448b POL.: And what of it, if they are sufficient for you?

CHAE.: Nothing. So since you wish, answer.

POL.: Ask.

CHAE.: I'm asking now. If Gorgias happened to be a knower of his brother Herodicus's art, what would we justly name him? Wouldn't it be what that one is named?

POL.: Certainly.

CHAE.: In asserting that he is a doctor, then, we would be saying something fine.

POL.: Yes.

CHAE.: And if he were experienced in the art of Aristophon the son of Aglaophon or of his brother,⁹ what would we rightly call him?

448c POL.: A painter, clearly.

CHAE.: Now then, since he is a knower of what art, what would we call him to call him rightly?

POL.: Chaerephon, many arts have been discovered among men experimentally through experiences. For experience causes our life to proceed by art, whereas inexperience causes it to proceed by chance. Of each of these arts, various men variously partake of various ones, and the best men partake of the best; among these is Gorgias here, and he has a share in the finest of the arts.

448d SOC.: Polus appears to have equipped himself finely for speeches,¹⁰ Gorgias; however, he isn't doing what he promised Chaerephon.

8. Younger than Socrates, a student of Gorgias, and like his teacher a foreigner in Athens (see 487a–b), Polus was a teacher of rhetoric and author of a treatise.

9. The more famous painter Polygnotus.

10. *Logos* has a broad range of meaning: speech in general, including talk or conversation; a formal, ordered speech; a reasoned speech as compared for instance to myth (see 523a); a

GOR.: How so, in particular, Socrates?

SOC.: He doesn't really appear to me to be answering what is asked.

GOR.: Well then you ask him, if you wish.

SOC.: No, at least not if you wish to answer yourself; it would be much more pleasant to ask you. For it is clear to me even from what he has said that Polus has practiced what is called rhetoric¹¹ rather than conversing.

448e POL.: How so, Socrates?

SOC.: Because, Polus, when Chaerephon asks of what art Gorgias is a knower, you extol his art as if someone were blaming it, but you did not answer what it is.

POL.: Didn't I answer that it was the finest?

SOC.: Very much so indeed. But no one asked what sort of art Gorgias's was, but what art, and what one ought to call Gorgias. Just as Chaerephon offered earlier examples and you answered him finely

449a and briefly, so now too say what art it is and what we must call Gorgias. Or rather, Gorgias, you tell us yourself what one must call you, as a knower of what art.

GOR.: Of rhetoric, Socrates.

SOC.: Then one must call you a rhetor?¹²

GOR.: And a good one, Socrates, if you wish to call me what I boast that I am, as Homer said.¹³

SOC.: But I do wish.

GOR.: Then call me so.

449b SOC.: So then should we assert that you are able to make others rhetors too?

GOR.: This indeed is what I proclaim, not only here but elsewhere too.

SOC.: Would you be willing then, Gorgias, to continue just as we are talking now, asking and answering, and to put off until afterwards

rational account or argument; reasoning itself. The connection between speech and reason suggested by the word *logos* plays an important role at several points in the arguments.

11. Socrates makes the first explicit mention of the dialogue's theme. The noun *rhētōr* means speaker, orator, rhetor (sometimes with the implication good speaker); the adjective *rhētorikos* means skilled in speaking, rhetorical, or (designating a person) rhetorician; with the feminine singular *rhētorikē* one supplies *technē* (or perhaps in certain contexts *epistēmē*) to understand the rhetorical art (or science), rhetoric.

12. *Rhētōr* can designate someone knowledgeable about speaking (whom one would tend to call a rhetorician) or a politician or statesman whose leadership stems from his speaking (whom one might want to call an orator); I avoid deciding each case by using the term "rhetor."

13. This stock Homeric formula can be found at *Iliad* 6.211, for instance.

this lengthiness of speech that Polus started? Don't play false with what you promise, but be willing to answer what is asked briefly.

GOR.: Some answers, Socrates, must necessarily be made in speeches of great length; but I shall nevertheless try, at least, to speak as briefly
449c as possible. For indeed this too is one of the things I assert, that no one could say the same things in briefer speeches than I.

SOC.: That is just what's needed, Gorgias. Make a display for me of precisely this, brief speaking, and put off the lengthy speaking until afterwards.

GOR.: I shall do so, and you will assert you've heard no one briefer of speech.

SOC.: Well then. You assert that you are a knower of the art of rhetoric and could make another a rhetor as well. What, of the things that
449d are, does rhetoric happen to be about? Just as weaving is about the production of clothing; isn't it?

GOR.: Yes.

SOC.: And then music is about the making of tunes?

GOR.: Yes.

SOC.: By Hera,¹⁴ Gorgias, I admire the answers, how you answer through the briefest ones possible!

GOR.: Indeed I think, Socrates, that I'm doing this quite suitably.

SOC.: What you say is good. Come then, answer me in this manner about rhetoric as well: about what, of the things that are, is it a science?

449e GOR.: About speeches.

SOC.: What sort of speeches, Gorgias? Those that make clear to the sick by what way of life they would be healthy?

GOR.: No.

SOC.: Then rhetoric is not about *all* speeches.

GOR.: No, it's not.

SOC.: Yet it does make men able to speak.

GOR.: Yes.

SOC.: And therefore able also to understand what they are speaking about?

GOR.: Indeed, how could it not?

450a SOC.: Well then, does the medical art that we were just now talking about make men able to understand and speak about the sick?

14. Hera, wife of Zeus, seems to be named as an oath most often by women.

GOR.: Necessarily.

SOC.: Then medicine too, as it seems, is about speeches.

GOR.: Yes.

SOC.: Those about diseases?

GOR.: Very much so.

SOC.: So then, is gymnastic too about speeches, those about the good and bad condition of bodies?

GOR.: Certainly.

SOC.: And indeed such is the case with the other arts too, Gorgias.

450b Each of them is about those speeches that happen to be about the business of which each is the art.

GOR.: Apparently.

SOC.: Why in the world then don't you call the other arts rhetorical, seeing that they are about speeches, if indeed you call this one rhetoric because it is about speeches?

GOR.: Because, Socrates, the whole science, one might say, of the other arts is concerned with manual skill and such actions, whereas in rhetoric there is no such handiwork, but its whole action and decisive effect are through speeches. For these reasons I claim that the art of rhetoric is concerned with speeches, and what I say is right, as I assert.

450c SOC.: So am I then beginning to understand what sort of thing you wish to call it? Well, perhaps I shall know more clearly. Answer then: we have arts, don't we?

GOR.: Yes.

SOC.: Now, taking all the arts, in some of them, I think, working is the major part and they need little¹⁵ speech (and some need no speech), but the business of the art would be accomplished even in silence, such as painting and sculpting and many others. You seem to me to mean such arts, with which you say rhetoric has nothing to do. Isn't that so?

450d GOR.: Your apprehension, Socrates, is certainly fine indeed.

SOC.: And then there are other arts that accomplish everything through speech, and need in addition almost no work or very little, such as arithmetic, calculation, and geometry, yes, and draught playing¹⁶ and many other arts. In some of these the speeches are approximately equal to the actions, but in many the speeches are greater,

15. "Little" here (and in Socrates' next speech) translates the same word that he used earlier in calling for "brief speaking."

16. A game that appears to have resembled checkers, played with partners against opponents (see *Republic* 333d). It seems often in Plato to be an image of dialectic, with the setting

450e and absolutely their whole action and decisive effect¹⁷ are through speeches. You seem to me to be saying that rhetoric is one of the arts of this sort.

GOR.: What you say is true.

SOC.: But I do not think you wish to call any one of these rhetoric, notwithstanding that in your verbal statement you said that the art that has its decisive effect through speech is rhetoric, and someone might retort, if he wished to make difficulties in the argument, "Do you then say, Gorgias, that arithmetic is rhetoric?" But I do not think you are saying that either arithmetic or geometry is rhetoric.

451a GOR.: What you think is right, Socrates, and your apprehension is just.

SOC.: Come now, you too; provide a complete answer in the way I asked.¹⁸ Since rhetoric happens to be one of those arts that use speech for the most part, and other arts too happen to be of the same sort, try to say what rhetoric, which has its decisive effect in speeches, is about. Just as if someone asked me about any one of the arts that we

451b were just now talking about, "Socrates, what is the art of arithmetic?" I should say to him, just as you recently did, that it is one of those that have their decisive effect through speech. And if he asked me further, "What are they about?" I should say it is one of those that are about the even and the odd, however large each happens to be. And again, if he asked, "What art do you call calculation?" I should say that it too is one of those that accomplish their whole decisive effect by speech. And if he asked further, "What is it about?" I should say, just

451c like those who write up proposals in the people's assembly,¹⁹ that in other respects calculation is just like arithmetic (for it is about the same thing, the even and the odd), but it differs to this extent, that calculation examines how great the odd and the even are in relation

down and movement of pieces resembling the positing and changing of suppositions in discussion.

17. "Decisive effect" translates *to kuros*, whose more basic meaning is supreme power or authority. The same translation was used at 450b for the less common *hē kurōsis*, which can mean ratification.

18. The translation follows Dodds's correction (E. R. Dodds, *Plato; Gorgias* [A Revised Text with Introduction and Commentary] [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959]; the chief manuscript reading would appear to mean "provide a complete answer to what I asked."

19. Later on Socrates starkly opposes his concerns and ways to those characteristic of politics, but here he compares his procedure to the work of politicians drafting proposed legislation. Perhaps he thus gently steers the conversation about rhetoric away from display speeches and toward political rhetoric. Writing or composing legislation plays a brief but crucial role in Socrates' discussion of writing in the *Phaedrus*, at 257c–258d, 277d, and 278c–e.

to themselves and to one another. And if someone asked about astronomy, and if, when I said that it too accomplishes all its decisive effects by speech, he said "What, Socrates, are the speeches of astronomy about?" I should say that they are about what speed the motions of stars, sun, and moon have in relation to one another.

GOR.: What you would say is right, Socrates.

451d SOC.: Come then, you too, Gorgias. For rhetoric happens to be one of the arts that carry out and accomplish all their decisive effects by speech, isn't it?

GOR.: That is so.

SOC.: Then say, what are those arts about? Of the things that are, what is this thing that these speeches used by rhetoric are about?

GOR.: The greatest of human affairs, Socrates, and the best.

SOC.: But what you are saying now, Gorgias, is also debatable and
451e is as yet nothing distinct. For I think that in drinking parties you have heard human beings singing this song, in which they enumerate in song that "being healthy is best, and second is to have become beautiful, and third," as the poet who wrote the song says, "is being wealthy without fraud."²⁰

GOR.: I have heard it; but to what purpose do you say this?

452a SOC.: Because if at this moment the craftsmen of those things praised by him who made the song stood by you—the doctor, the trainer, and the moneymaker—and first the doctor said, "Socrates, Gorgias is deceiving you; for his art is not concerned with the greatest good for human beings, but mine is." If then I asked him, "Who are you that say these things?" he would probably say that he was a doctor. "What then are you saying? Is the work of your art the greatest good?" "How could it not be, Socrates," he would probably say, "since its

452b work is health? What is a greater good for human beings than health?" And if after him the trainer in turn said, "I too should be amazed, Socrates, if Gorgias can display for you a greater good of his art than I can of mine," I should in turn say to him as well, "You then, who are you, human being, and what is your work?" "A trainer," he would say, "and my work is making human beings beautiful and strong in body." After the trainer, the moneymaker would speak, de-

20. On the qualification "without fraud," compare philosophizing without fraud at *Phaedrus* 249a. Dodds gives the full quatrain as quoted by the scholiast and notes that Socrates omits the song's fourth good, "to be in the prime of youth with friends." Socrates also drops the specification *phuan* from the third good: "beautiful in one's nature (growth, stature)."

spising everyone very much, as I think: "Only look, Socrates, if anything manifests itself to you as a greater good than wealth, whether
 452c in Gorgias's possession or anybody else's." We should then say to him, "What's that? Are you a craftsman of this?" He would say yes. "Who are you?" "A moneymaker." "What then? Do you judge wealth to be the greatest good for human beings?" we will say. "How could it not be?" he will say. "And yet Gorgias here disputes that, arguing that the art in his possession is the cause of greater good than yours," we should say. So it is clear that after this he would ask, "And what
 452d is this good? Let Gorgias answer!" Come then, Gorgias: considering yourself asked both by those men and by me, answer what this is which you say is the greatest good for human beings and of which you are a craftsman.

GOR.: That which is in truth, Socrates, the greatest good and the cause both of freedom for human beings themselves and at the same time of rule over others in each man's own city.²¹

SOC.: What then do you say this is?

452e GOR.: I for one say it is being able to persuade by speeches judges in the law court, councillors in the council, assemblymen in the assembly, and in every other gathering whatsoever, when there is a political gathering.²² And indeed with this power you will have the doctor as your slave, and the trainer as your slave; and that moneymaker of yours will be plainly revealed to be making money for another and not for himself, but for you who can speak and persuade multitudes.

SOC.: You seem to me now, Gorgias, very nearly to have made clear
 453a what art you consider rhetoric to be, and if I understand anything, you're saying that rhetoric is a craftsman of persuasion, and its whole occupation and chief point ends in this. Or do you have anything further to say, which rhetoric can produce in the soul of the listeners, in addition to persuasion?

21. In Thucydides 3.45.6, Diodotus calls the greatest things freedom and rule over others. "City" translates *polis*, the self-sufficient, independent political community.

22. The notion of a law court as a political gathering would make obvious sense to an ancient Greek accustomed to large juries (or assemblies of judges), like the five hundred who heard the accusation against Socrates and found him guilty. In Socrates' suggested definition of rhetoric at *Phaedrus* 561a–b, rhetoric is emphatically not limited to addressing political groups. One imagines that Gorgias himself has intellectual interests beyond the political, but doubtless he singles out rhetoric's political power here to appeal to the chief concern of potential students.

GOR.: Not at all, Socrates; you seem to me to define it adequately, for this is its chief point.

453b SOC.: Now listen, Gorgias. For I—know it well—as I persuade myself, if ever anyone talks with someone else wishing to know the very thing that the speech is about, I too am one of these people, and I deem that you are too.

GOR.: What then, Socrates?

453c SOC.: Now I'll tell you. Know well that I do not distinctly know what in the world this persuasion from rhetoric is of which you are speaking, and what matters the persuasion is about—not but that I have a suspicion, at least, of what I think you are saying it is and what things it is about. But I shall nonetheless ask you what in the world you say this persuasion from rhetoric is, and what things it is about. On account of what do I, who have a suspicion, ask you and not say myself? Not on account of you, but on account of the argument, in order that it may go forward so as to make what is being talked about as manifest as possible to us. Now consider if I seem to you to question you justly: just as if I happened to be asking you who Zeuxis is among painters, if you said to me that he was one who painted living beings, wouldn't I justly ask you, one who painted what kinds of living beings and where?

GOR.: Certainly.

453d SOC.: Would it be for this reason, that there are other painters too, who paint many other living beings?

GOR.: Yes.

SOC.: But if no one other than Zeuxis painted,²³ your answer would have been fine?

GOR.: How could it not be?

SOC.: Come then, speak about rhetoric as well. Does rhetoric alone seem to you to produce persuasion or do other arts too? I am saying something of this sort: whenever anyone teaches any subject at all, does the one who teaches persuade or not?

GOR.: Absolutely yes, Socrates; he persuades most of all.

453e SOC.: Then let us speak again on the same arts as just now. Doesn't arithmetic teach us as many things as belong to number, and the arithmetical man does too?

23. The verb for "painted" here is *graphein*, to write; the word translated "painter" has the roots "write" and "living" (or life, alive, animal). On possible links among rhetoric, writing, and painting, see *Phaedrus* 275d.

GOR.: Certainly.

SOC.: And so it persuades too?

GOR.: Yes.

SOC.: Then arithmetic too is a craftsman of persuasion?

GOR.: Apparently.

SOC.: So then if someone asks us what sort of persuasion, and about what, we shall probably answer him that it is didactic, about the even

454a and the odd, however large. And for all the other arts that we were just now talking about, we shall be able to show that they are craftsmen of persuasion, and what the persuasion is, and about what, won't we?

GOR.: Yes.

SOC.: Therefore rhetoric is not the only craftsman of persuasion.

GOR.: What you say is true.

SOC.: Since, therefore, not it alone but also others achieve this work, just as concerning the painter, we might after this justly ask the speaker further, "Of what sort of persuasion, and of persuasion about what, is rhetoric the art?" Or doesn't it seem to you just to ask further?

454b GOR.: It does to me, at any rate.

SOC.: Answer then, Gorgias, since it seems so to you too.

GOR.: I say then, Socrates, persuasion in law courts and in other mobs, as I was saying just a moment ago, and about those things that are just and unjust.²⁴

454c SOC.: And surely I had a suspicion that you meant this persuasion, and about these things, Gorgias. But so that you may not be amazed if again a little later I ask you some other such thing, which seems to be clear but which I ask about further—for, as I said, I ask for the sake of the argument's being brought to a conclusion in a consequential manner, not on account of you but so that we may not become accustomed to guessing and hastily snatching up each other's words, but so that you may bring your own views to a conclusion in accord with what you set down, in whatever way you wish.

GOR.: And in my opinion, Socrates, you are doing so rightly, at any rate.

SOC.: Come then, let us examine this as well. Do you call one thing "to have learned?"

24. Gorgias, perhaps still constrained by Socrates' demand for brevity, further narrows the focus of rhetoric here—perhaps also to emphasize a forensic rhetoric that is most in demand from students (consider Aristophanes' *Clouds*, vv. 98–99 and *passim*).

GOR.: Yes I do.

SOC.: And how about "to have believed?"

454d GOR.: I do.

SOC.: Now, do having learned and having believed, and learning and belief,²⁵ seem to you to be the same thing, or something different?

GOR.: Different, Socrates, I certainly think.

SOC.: Indeed, what you think is fine; and you will perceive it from this. For if someone asked you, "Is there, Gorgias, a false belief and a true one?" you would, as I think, say yes.

GOR.: Yes.

SOC.: And what about this: Is there false and true knowledge?

GOR.: Not at all.

SOC.: It is clear, therefore, that they are not the same thing.

GOR.: What you say is true.

454e SOC.: But surely both those who have learned and those who have believed are persuaded.

GOR.: That is so.

SOC.: Do you wish us then to set down two forms²⁶ of persuasion, one that provides belief without knowing, and one that provides knowledge?

GOR.: Certainly.

SOC.: Which persuasion, then, does rhetoric produce in law courts and the other mobs, about just and unjust things? The one from which believing comes into being without knowing, or the one from which knowing comes?

GOR.: It's clear, I suppose, Socrates, that it's the one from which believing comes.

455a SOC.: Rhetoric, then, as seems likely, is a craftsman of belief-inspiring but not didactic persuasion about the just and the unjust.²⁷

GOR.: Yes.

25. *Pistis*, belief (or conviction, trust) is used in the *Republic* to name the second part of the divided line (the level of our sense perceptions). Here it is distinguished from *mathēsis*.

26. The word is *eidos*, which means the looks, the form, the class character of a thing. I have translated it "form" wherever possible, and noted any variation from that. I have simply transliterated the related word *idea*. *Eidos* and *idea* designate the objects of genuine knowledge in, for example, *Republic* 7.

27. "Didactic" and "to teach" stem from the same root in Greek.

Struck by Socrates' open attack on rhetors a bit further on, one easily overlooks his own important resemblance to them. Given his often-admitted lack of knowledge and his denial that he teaches (e.g., at *Apology* 33a), he could be understood, like them, to produce nondidactic persuasion.

soc.: The rhetor, therefore, is not didactic with law courts and the other mobs about just and unjust things, but persuasive only; for he would not be able, I suppose, to teach so large a mob such great matters in a short time.²⁸

GOR.: Indeed not.

soc.: Come then, let us see what we are really saying about rhetoric;
 455b for indeed I am myself as yet unable fully to understand what I am saying. When the city has a gathering concerned with the choice of doctors or shipwrights or some other craftsmanlike tribe, the rhetorician then will not give counsel, will he? For it is clear that in each choice one must choose the most artful. Nor when it concerns the building of walls or the preparation of harbors and dockyards, but rather architects; nor, again, when there is deliberation about the
 455c choice of generals or some disposition of troops against enemies or the seizing of territories, but then those skilled in generalship will give counsel, and rhetoricians will not. Or what do you say, Gorgias, about such things? For since you say that you are yourself a rhetor and make others rhetoricians, it is well to learn the things of your art from you. And consider that I am now eagerly promoting your affair too. For perhaps some one of those inside happens to wish to become a student of yours, as I perceive some, indeed quite a large number,
 455d who perhaps would be ashamed to ask you. So, being asked by me, consider that you are asked by them too: "What will be ours, Gorgias, if we associate with you? About what things will we be able to give counsel to the city? About the just and unjust alone, or also about the things of which Socrates was speaking just now?" So try to answer them.

GOR.: I shall indeed try, Socrates, clearly to uncover for you the whole power of rhetoric; for you yourself have beautifully led the way. For
 455e you know, I suppose, that these dockyards and the Athenians' walls and the preparation of the harbors came into being from Themistocles' counsel, and others from Pericles',²⁹ but not from the craftsmen.

28. Could one imagine a more tactful way of bringing up the rhetor's lack of concern for conveying knowledge about issues of justice? At *Apology* 37a–b, Socrates explains his own failure to persuade his judges through the shortness of time available and praises the practice elsewhere of allowing several days for a capital case. On the importance of adequate time for judicial proceedings, see *Laws* 766e.

29. Gorgias gives as examples the leading founder and the most prominent developer of Athens's imperial power. See Thucydides' accounts and judgments of these figures in books 1 and 2 of his *History of the Peloponnesian War*.

soc.: These things are said, Gorgias, about Themistocles; and Pericles I heard myself when he gave us counsel about the middle wall.

456a gor.: And whenever there is a choice involving the things you were just now speaking of, Socrates, you see that the rhetors are the ones who give counsel and victoriously carry their resolutions about these things.

soc.: And it is in amazement at these things, Gorgias, that I have long been asking what in the world the power of rhetoric is. For it manifestly appears to me as a power demonic in greatness, when I consider it in this way.

gor.: If only you knew the whole of it, Socrates—that it gathers together and holds under itself all powers, so to speak. I shall relate to
 456b you a great piece of evidence. On many occasions now I have gone in with my brother and with other doctors to one of the sick who was unwilling either to drink a drug or to submit himself to the doctor for surgery or cautery; the doctor being unable to persuade him, I persuaded him, by no other art than rhetoric. And I assert further that, if a rhetorical man and a doctor should go into any city you wish and should have to contest in speech, in the assembly or in some other
 456c gathering, which of the two ought to be chosen doctor, the doctor would plainly be nowhere, but the man with power to speak would be chosen, if he wished. And if he should contest against any other craftsman whatsoever, the rhetorician rather than anyone else would persuade them to choose himself. For there is nothing about which the rhetorician would not speak more persuasively than any other of the craftsmen in a multitude. The power of the art, then, is so great and of such a sort; one must, however, use rhetoric, Socrates, just as every
 456d other competitive skill. For one must not use other competitive skills against all human beings on this account, that one has learned boxing and *pankration*³⁰ and fighting in heavy armor, so as to be stronger than both friends and enemies—one must not on this account either beat or stab and kill friends. Nor, by Zeus, if someone who has frequented a wrestling-school, is in good bodily condition, and has become skilled in boxing, then beats his father and mother or some
 456e other relative or friend, one must not on this account hate the trainers and those who teach fighting in heavy armor, and expel them

30. *Pankration*, whose roots mean “all” and “power,” was a combination of wrestling and boxing.

from the cities. For they imparted their skill to these men to use justly against enemies and doers of injustice, in defending themselves, not
 457a in starting something; but these men, perverting it, use the might and the art incorrectly. Those who taught are therefore not base, nor is the art either blameworthy or base on this account, but, I think, those who do not use it correctly. The very same argument applies to rhetoric as well. For the rhetor has power to speak against all men and
 457b about everything, so as to be more persuasive in multitudes about, in brief, whatever he wishes; but it nonetheless does not follow that one must on this account deprive the doctors of reputation—for he could do this—nor the other craftsmen, but one must use rhetoric justly too, just as competitive skill. And, I think, if someone has become a rhetorician and then does injustice with this power and art,³¹ one must not hate the man who taught him and expel him from the cities. For
 457c that man imparted it for just use, and the other used it in the opposite way. It is just, then, to hate, expel, and kill the one who uses it not correctly, but not the one who taught it.

soc.: I think, Gorgias, that you too have had experience of many arguments and have observed in them something of the following sort, that they cannot easily define for each other the things that they endeavor to talk about, and learn and teach each other, and in this manner break off the conversations; but when they disagree about something and one says the other is not speaking correctly or not clearly,
 457d they become sorely angry and think the other is speaking from envy of themselves, loving victory but not seeking the subject proposed in the argument. And some in the end give over most shamefully,³² having reviled each other and said and heard about themselves such things that even those present are annoyed with themselves, because
 457e they thought it worthwhile to become the audience of such human beings. On account of what, then, do I say these things? Because now you seem to me to be saying things not quite consequent upon nor consistent with what you were saying at first about rhetoric. So I'm afraid to refute you, lest you suppose that I speak from love of victory, not in regard to the subject's becoming manifest, but in regard

31. Gorgias's awareness that rhetoric like any other skill may be used unjustly as well as justly is doubtless linked with his reportedly not promising that he taught virtue, unlike other sophists, but even ridiculing that claim (*Meno* 96c).

32. This adverb in the superlative derives from *aischros*, the opposite of *kalos* (see note 4 at 447a); I translate with either "ugly" or "shameful."

458a to you. Now then, if you too are one of the human beings of whom I am also one, I would with pleasure question you further; and if not, I would let it drop. And of what men am I one? Those who are refuted with pleasure if I say something not true, and who refute with pleasure if someone should say something not true—and indeed not with less pleasure to be refuted than to refute. For I consider it a greater good, to the extent that it is a greater good to be released oneself from the greatest evil than to release another. For I think that
 458b nothing is so great an evil for a human being as false opinion about the things that our argument now happens to be about. So if you too say you are such a one, let us converse; but if indeed it seems that we must let it drop, let us forthwith bid it farewell and break off the argument.

GOR.: But I say that I myself, Socrates, am also such a one as you indicate; but perhaps we must nevertheless give thought also to the situation of those present. Quite a while ago, you see, before you came, I made a display for those present of many things, and now perhaps we
 458c shall prolong it too far, if we converse. We must, then, consider their situation, lest we detain some of them who wish to do something else. CHAE.: You yourselves, Gorgias and Socrates, hear the uproar³³ from these men, wishing to hear what you'll say. And as for me, may I not have so great a lack of leisure as to pass up such arguments, spoken in such a manner, so that doing something else becomes more important to me!

458d CAL.: By the gods, Chaerephon, yes indeed, and I too have by now been present at many arguments, and I don't know if I have ever had such pleasure as now. So for me, even if you should want to converse the whole day long, you'll be gratifying me.

soc.: Indeed, Callicles, for my part nothing prevents it, if Gorgias is willing.

GOR.: It would indeed be shameful after all this, Socrates, for me to be unwilling, since I myself made the proclamation to ask whatever any-
 458e one wishes. Well then, if it seems good to these men, converse and ask what you wish.

soc.: Hear then, Gorgias, the things I was amazed at in what you said; for perhaps what you are saying is correct but I am not appre-

33. *Thorubos* can be the noise of approval, as here, or of disapproval, like the noise made against certain things that Socrates said at his trial (*Apology* 17d, 20e, 21a, 27b, and 30c).

hending it correctly. Do you say that you can make someone a rhetorician, if he wishes to learn from you?

GOR.: Yes.

soc.: And so as to be persuasive in a mob about all things, not by teaching but by persuading?

459a GOR.: Yes, certainly.

soc.: Then you were saying just now that the rhetor will be more persuasive than the doctor even about the healthy.

GOR.: Yes I was—that is, in a mob.

soc.: So then, does the “in a mob” amount to this: among those who don’t know? For among those who know, at any rate, I don’t suppose he will be more persuasive than the doctor.

GOR.: What you say is true.

soc.: So then if he’ll be more persuasive than the doctor, does he become more persuasive than the one who knows?

GOR.: Certainly.

459b soc.: Since he’s not a doctor, at any rate; is he?

GOR.: No.

soc.: And the nondoctor, I suppose, is a nonknower of the things of which the doctor is a knower.

GOR.: Clearly so.

soc.: The one who does not know, therefore, will be more persuasive than the one who knows among those who don’t know, whenever the rhetor is more persuasive than the doctor. Is this what happens, or something else?

GOR.: In this case, at least, that is what happens.

soc.: So then is the rhetor, and rhetoric, in the same situation in regard to all the other arts as well? It does not at all need to know how the matters themselves stand, but to have discovered a certain device of persuasion so as to appear to know more than those who know, to those who don’t know.

459c GOR.: Does not much ease in doing things thus come about, Socrates, in that one who has not learned the other arts but only this one, in no way gets the worst of it from the craftsmen?

soc.: Whether the rhetor gets the worst of it or not from the others through being thus, we shall examine presently, if it should have something to do with our argument. But now let us first consider the following. Does the rhetorician happen to be in this same situation in regard to the just and the unjust, the shameful and the noble, and

good and bad, as he is in regard to the healthy and the other things belonging to the other arts: not knowing the things themselves—what is good or what bad or what noble or what shameful or just or unjust—but having devised persuasion about them so as, though not
 459e knowing, to seem to know more than the one who knows, among those who don't know? Or is it necessary to know, and must the one who is going to learn rhetoric know these things before coming to you? And if not, will you, the teacher of rhetoric, teach him who comes nothing of these things—for it is not your work—and will you make him who doesn't know such things seem among the many to know, and seem to be good although he isn't? Or will you be wholly unable to teach him rhetoric, unless he knows the truth about these things
 460a beforehand? Or what is the case with such things, Gorgias? And by Zeus, uncover rhetoric, as you were recently saying, and say what in the world its power is.

GOR.: Well I think, Socrates, if he happens not to know, he will learn these things too from me.

SOC.: Stop there, for what you say is fine. If you make someone a rhetorician, he must of necessity know the just and the unjust things, either beforehand or by learning them later from you.

GOR.: Certainly.

460b SOC.: What about this, then? Is the one who has learned the things of carpentry a carpenter?

GOR.: Yes.

SOC.: So too, then, is the one who has learned the musical things musical?

GOR.: Yes.

SOC.: And is the one who has learned the medical things a doctor? And thus for the other things according to the same argument, is the one who has learned each set of things such as the science makes each man?

GOR.: Certainly.

SOC.: So then according to this argument, is also the one who has learned the just things just?

GOR.: Quite so, I suppose.

SOC.: And the just man does just things, I suppose.

GOR.: Yes.

460c SOC.: So then is it necessary that the rhetorician be just, and that the just man wish to do just things?

GOR.: Apparently, at least.

SOC.: Therefore the just man will never wish to do injustice.

GOR.: Necessarily.

SOC.: And it's necessary from the argument that the rhetorician be just.

GOR.: Yes.

SOC.: Therefore the rhetorician will never wish to do injustice.

GOR.: Apparently not, at least.³⁴

SOC.: Now then, do you remember saying a little while ago that one must not bring charges against the trainers and expel them from the cities, if the boxer uses the art of boxing and does injustice, and thus
460d also, in the same way, if the rhetor uses rhetoric unjustly, one must not bring charges against the one who taught and drive him out of the city, but against the one who does injustice and does not use rhetoric rightly? Were these things said, or not?

GOR.: They were said.

SOC.: But now, at any rate, this same man, the rhetorician, is manifestly one who would never do injustice. Isn't he?
460e

GOR.: Apparently.

SOC.: And in the first speeches, at least, Gorgias, it was said that rhetoric was concerned with speeches not about the even and odd, but about the just and unjust. Wasn't it?

GOR.: Yes.

SOC.: Accordingly, when you were then saying these things, I supposed that rhetoric would never be an unjust business, since indeed it always makes speeches about justice; but since a little later you
461a said that the rhetor might use rhetoric unjustly as well, I was thus amazed and thought that the things said did not harmonize, and so I made those speeches, that if you thought, just as I do, that it is a gain to be refuted, it would be worthwhile to discuss, but if not, let's bid it farewell. And from our later investigation you too see now for yourself that once again it is agreed that the rhetorician is powerless to use rhetoric unjustly and to want to do injustice. So then, what
461b in the world is the case with these things, by the dog,³⁵ Gorgias, is a matter for no little conversation, so as to examine it adequately.

POL.: What's this, Socrates? Do you too actually hold such an opinion

34. Many editors suspect some interpolation in this apparently over-elaborated set of exchanges, and drop one or two of them.

35. When he uses this unusual oath again at 482b, Socrates indicates that "the dog" was an Egyptian god (the dog-headed god Anubis).

- about rhetoric as you are now saying? Or do you think—because Gorgias was ashamed not to agree further with you that the rhetorical man also knows the just, noble, and good things, and if he came to him not knowing these things, that he himself would teach them, and then from this agreement perhaps some contradiction came about
- 461c in the speeches (this you are really fond of, when you yourself have led people on to such questions)—for who do you think would utterly deny both that he knows the just things and that he would teach others? But it is much rudeness to lead arguments into such things.
- soc.: Most noble Polus, surely it is on purpose that we acquire companions and sons, so that when we ourselves, having become older, are tripped up, you younger ones who are present might set our life
- 461d upright again, both in deeds and in speeches. And so now if Gorgias and I are being tripped up in the speeches on some point, you who are present set us upright—and so you are just—and if something of what has been agreed on seems to you not to have been agreed on finely, I am willing for you to take back whatever you wish,³⁶ if you guard against only one thing for me.
- POL.: What do you mean by this?
- soc.: That you confine the lengthiness of speech, Polus, that you attempted to use at first.
- POL.: What's this? Will it not be allowed me to say as much as I wish?
- 461e soc.: You would certainly suffer terrible things, best of men, if you came to Athens, where there is the most freedom to speak in Greece, and then you alone had the misfortune not to get any there. But then set against it this: if you are speaking at length and are unwilling to answer what is asked, would I on the other hand not suffer terrible
- 462a things, if it will not be allowed me to go away and not to listen to you? But if something in the argument that has been stated bothers you and you wish to set it upright, as I was just now saying, take back what seems good to you, and, in your turn asking and being asked, just as Gorgias and I, refute and be refuted. For you assert, I suppose, that you too know the things that Gorgias knows, don't you?
- POL.: I do.
- soc.: So then do you too on each occasion bid one to ask you whatever one wishes, on the grounds that you know what to answer?
- POL.: Yes, certainly.
- 462b soc.: And now then, do whichever of these you wish, ask or answer.

36. The phrase appears to be a metaphor from draught playing; see note at 450d.

POL.: Well, I shall do this. And answer me, Socrates: since Gorgias in your opinion is at a loss concerning rhetoric, what do you say it is?

SOC.: Are you then asking me what art I say it is?

POL.: I am.

SOC.: In my opinion at least, it is no art, Polus, to tell you the truth.

POL.: But what in your opinion is rhetoric?

SOC.: A business that you say makes art,³⁷ in the writing that I have
462c lately read.

POL.: What do you mean by this?

SOC.: I mean a certain experience.

POL.: Then rhetoric in your opinion is experience?

SOC.: In my opinion, at any rate, unless you say something else.

POL.: Experience of what?

SOC.: Of the production of a certain grace and pleasure.

POL.: So then isn't rhetoric in your opinion a fine thing, since it's able to gratify human beings?

SOC.: What, Polus? Have you already learned from me what I say it
462d is, so that you are asking what comes after this, if it isn't fine in my opinion?

POL.: Well, haven't I learned that you say it is a certain experience?

SOC.: Do you wish then, since you honor gratifying, to gratify me in a small matter?

POL.: I do.

SOC.: Ask me now, what art is cookery in my opinion.

POL.: I am asking then, what art is cookery?

SOC.: No art, Polus. Well, say, "But what is it?"

POL.: I am saying it.

SOC.: A certain experience. Say, "Of what?"

POL.: I am saying it.

462e SOC.: Of the production of grace and pleasure, Polus.

POL.: Is cookery therefore the same thing as rhetoric?

SOC.: Not at all, but certainly a part of the same pursuit.

POL.: What pursuit do you say this is?

SOC.: I'm afraid it may be rather rude to tell the truth; indeed I shrink from speaking on account of Gorgias, lest he think I am satirizing³⁸ his pursuit. But whether the rhetoric that Gorgias pursues is this, I

37. Dodds argues for an alternative meaning: a business "of which you claim to have made an art in your treatise."

38. The Greek word (*diakōmōdein*) contains the word for "comedy."

463a do not know—for from our recent argument, what in the world he considers it to be did not at all become manifest to us—but what I call rhetoric is part of a certain business that is not one of the fine ones.

GOR.: What business, Socrates? Speak, without feeling ashamed before me.

soc.: In my opinion, then, Gorgias, it is a certain pursuit that is not artful but belongs to a soul that is skilled at guessing, courageous,³⁹ and terribly clever by nature at associating with human beings; and
 463b I call its chief point flattery. Of this pursuit there are, in my opinion, many various parts, and one of them is cookery; it seems to be an art, but—as my argument goes—is not an art but experience and routine. I also call rhetoric a part of this pursuit, and cosmetic too and sophistry, these four parts directed to four kinds of business. So then if
 463c Polus wishes to learn, let him learn; for he has not yet learned what sort of part of flattery I say rhetoric is, but my not yet answering has escaped his notice, and he is asking further whether I do not consider it to be a fine thing. But I shall not answer him whether I consider rhetoric to be a fine or a shameful thing before I first answer what it is. For it's not just, Polus; but if you wish to learn, ask what sort of part of flattery I say rhetoric is.

POL.: I am asking then, so answer what sort of part.

463d soc.: Well now, would you then understand when I've answered? For rhetoric according to my argument is a phantom of a part of politics.⁴⁰

POL.: What then? Do you say it is a fine or a shameful thing?

soc.: I say shameful—for I call bad things shameful—since I must answer you as if you already knew what I'm saying.

GOR.: But by Zeus, Socrates, even I myself do not comprehend what you're saying!

463e soc.: Quite likely, Gorgias, for I am not yet saying anything clear, but Polus here is young and swift.⁴¹

39. *Andreios*, "courageous," comes from *anēr*, an emphatically male man, and might well be translated "manly." *Anthrōpos* (which at the cost of occasional awkwardness I have translated "human being") refers more broadly to any member of the human species.

40. *Politikē* could also be translated "statesmanship" or "the political art." Because Socrates is calling into question whether a given pursuit is or is not an art, I have at this point preferred "politics" so as to leave the question open for now.

41. Socrates' reference to youth and swiftness may evoke a pun on Polus's name, which means "colt."

GOR.: Well, leave him be, and tell me what you mean in saying that rhetoric is a phantom of a part of politics.

soc.: Well, I shall try to declare what rhetoric is, as it appears to me; and if it happens not to be this, Polus here will refute it. You call
464a something body, I suppose, and soul?

GOR.: Indeed, how could I not?

soc.: So then, do you also think there is a certain good condition of each of these?

GOR.: I do.

soc.: What about this? Do you think there is a good condition that seems to be, but is not? I mean, for instance, something of this sort: many seem to be in good bodily condition, whom one would not easily perceive not to be in good condition, but a doctor and one of those skilled in gymnastic would.

GOR.: What you say is true.

soc.: I say that such a thing exists both in body and in soul, which makes the body and the soul seem to be in good condition, but they
464b nonetheless are not.

GOR.: These things are so.

soc.: Now then, if I can, I shall more clearly display to you what I'm saying. Since there are two kinds of business, I say there are two arts. The one directed to the soul I call politics; the one directed to the body I am unable to name for you in this way, but I say that, while the care of the body is one, it has two parts, gymnastic and medicine; and that of politics, the legislative art is comparable to gymnastic,
464c and justice⁴² is the counterpart to medicine. On the one hand, each of these two share something in common with each other, seeing that they are about the same thing, medicine with gymnastic and justice with the legislative art; on the other hand, they nevertheless differ somewhat from each other. Now these are four, and always take care—some of the body, the others of the soul—in accord with what is best. But flattery⁴³ perceived this (I do not mean by knowing but by guessing), divided itself into four, and slipped in under each of the
464d parts; it pretends to be this that it has slipped in under, and gives no heed to the best but hunts after folly with what is ever most pleasant,

42. Reading *dikaiousunē*; an alternate reading, *dikastikē*, could be translated "the judge's art," as at 520b.

43. Socrates uses feminine singular *kolakeutikē*; were it not for the context, my usual practice would lead me to translate "the art of flattery."

- and deceives, so as to seem to be worth very much. So cookery has slipped in under medicine and pretends to know the best foods for the body, so that, if the cook and the doctor had to contest among children or among men as thoughtless as children which of the two,
- 464e the doctor or the cook, has understanding about useful and bad foods, the doctor would die of hunger. This, therefore, I call flattery,
- 465a and I assert that such a thing is shameful, Polus—for I am saying this to you—because it guesses at the pleasant without the best. And I assert that it is not art but experience, because it has no reasoned account, in regard to the thing to which it administers or the things that it administers, of what sort of things they are in their nature; and so it cannot state the cause of each thing. And I do not call art, a business that lacks a reasoned account. But if you disagree about these things, I am willing to provide a reasoned account.
- 465b Beneath medicine, therefore, as I'm saying, lies the flattery of cookery; and beneath gymnastic, according to this same manner, lies cosmetic, in that it is evildoing, deceitful, ignoble, and unfree, deceiving with shapes, colors, smoothness, and garments, so as to make them, as they take upon themselves an alien beauty, neglect their own beauty that comes through gymnastic. So in order not to speak at length, I want to speak to you just as the geometers do—for perhaps
- 465c you are already following me—saying that as cosmetic is to gymnastic, so is cookery to medicine; or rather thus: as cosmetic is to gymnastic, so is sophistry to the legislative art; and as cookery is to medicine, so is rhetoric to justice. As I was saying, however, this is the way they differ by nature, but—inasmuch as they are closely related—sophists and rhetors are mixed together in the same place and about the same things, and they do not know what use to make of themselves nor do other human beings know what use to make of them.
- 465d For indeed if the soul were not set over the body, but the body were set over itself, and if cookery and medicine were not contemplated and distinguished by the soul, but the body itself decided, measuring by the gratifications for itself, the saying of Anaxagoras⁴⁴ would be much to the point, Polus my friend—for you are experienced in these

44. The pre-Socratic philosopher Anaxagoras appears to have taught that some amount of each material is present in every thing. Socrates names him as a crucial influence on Pericles at *Phaedrus* 270a and quotes this same saying in *Phaedo* 72c. When Meletus says that Socrates teaches that the sun is a stone and the moon earth, Socrates belittles the accusation by asking Meletus whether he thinks he is accusing Anaxagoras (*Apology* 26d). In his brief

things—all matters would be mixed up together in the same place, with the things of medicine, health, and cookery indistinguishable.

So then, you have heard what I say rhetoric is: the counterpart of cookery in the soul, as that [is the counterpart of rhetoric] in the body.

465e Perhaps, then, I have done a strange thing in that, not permitting you to make lengthy speeches, I have myself extended a long speech. It is then appropriate to pardon me; for when I spoke briefly, you did not understand, and you were able to make no use of the answer that I gave you, but needed a full description. So then, when you are an-
466a swering, if I too do not know what use to make of it, you too extend your speech; but if I do, let me make use of it; for that is just. And now, if you can make some use of this answer, do so.

POL.: What then are you saying? Does rhetoric seem to you to be flattery?

SOC.: Nay rather I said a part of flattery. But do you not remember at your age, Polus? What will you do later?

POL.: So, do good rhetors therefore seem to you to be esteemed as lowly flatterers in the cities?

466b SOC.: Do you ask this as a question or are you stating the beginning of some speech?

POL.: I am asking.

SOC.: In my opinion, at any rate, they are not even esteemed.

POL.: What do you mean, not esteemed? Do they not have the greatest power in the cities?

SOC.: No, at least if you say that having power is something good for him who has it.

POL.: Indeed, I certainly do say so.

SOC.: Well then, rhetors seem to me to have the least power of those in the city.

466c POL.: What's this? Do they not, just like tyrants, kill whomever they wish, and confiscate possessions, and expel from the cities whom-
ever it seems good to them⁴⁵?

SOC.: By the dog, I am certainly of two minds, Polus, on each thing you say, whether you yourself are saying these things and revealing your own opinion, or whether you are asking me.

intellectual autobiography (*Phaedo* 97b–98c), Socrates recounts his intense interest, followed by disappointment, in Anaxagoras.

45. This phrase is regularly used for resolutions of the council and assembly in Athens; more literally it says, simply, "it seems to them."

POL.: Well, I am asking you.

SOC.: So be it, my friend. In that case are you asking me two things at once?

POL.: How so, two things?

SOC.: Were you not just now saying something like this: "Do not rhetors kill those whom they wish, just like tyrants, and confiscate possessions and drive out of the cities whomever it seems good to them?"

POL.: I was.

SOC.: Well then, I say to you that these are two questions, and I shall answer you both of them. For I assert, Polus, that both rhetors and tyrants have the smallest power in the cities, as I was saying just now; for they do nothing, one might almost say, of what they wish, although they certainly do what seems to them to be best.

POL.: Is not this, then, having great power?

SOC.: No, at least not as Polus says.

POL.: I say not? But I do indeed say so!

SOC.: By the . . . ! You do not, since you say that having great power is good for the one who has it.

POL.: I do indeed say so.

SOC.: Do you then think it is good, if someone who does not have intelligence does those things that seem to him to be best? And do you call this having great power?

POL.: No, I don't.

SOC.: Will you therefore show that rhetors have intelligence and that rhetoric is an art, but not flattery, having refuted me? If you leave me unrefuted, rhetors who do what seems good to them in the cities and tyrants will have acquired nothing good by this. And power is, as you say, a good thing, but you too agree that doing what seems good without intelligence is a bad thing; don't you?

POL.: I do.

SOC.: How then would rhetors or tyrants have great power in the cities, unless Socrates is refuted by Polus, to the effect that they do what they wish?

POL.: This man here . . . !

SOC.: I deny that they do what they wish. Well, refute me!

POL.: Weren't you just now agreeing that they do what seems to them to be best?

SOC.: Yes, and I agree now too.

POL.: So do they not then do what they wish?

soc.: I say not.

pol.: Doing what seems good to them?

soc.: Yes, I say.

pol.: You are saying shocking and extraordinary things, Socrates.

soc.: Don't be an accuser, most agreeable Polus—to address you after your fashion.⁴⁶ But if you have something to ask me, show that I am speaking false, and if not, answer yourself.

pol.: Well, I am willing to answer, so that I may know what you're saying.

soc.: Do human beings then seem to you to wish what they do on each occasion, or that for the sake of which they do what they do? For example, do those who drink a drug from the doctors seem to you to wish this thing that they are doing, drinking the drug and suffering pain, or that thing, being healthy, for the sake of which they drink?

467d pol.: Being healthy, clearly.

soc.: So then, both those who sail and those who transact other money-making business: what they wish is not what they do on each occasion (for who wishes to sail and be in danger and have troubles?) but, I think, that for the sake of which they sail, being wealthy; for they sail for the sake of wealth.

pol.: Certainly.

soc.: So isn't it also this way concerning all things? Whenever someone does something for the sake of something, he doesn't wish what he does, but that for the sake of which he does it?

467e pol.: Yes.

soc.: Now, among the things that are, is there anything that is neither good nor bad nor between these (neither good nor bad)?

pol.: No, very necessarily, Socrates.

soc.: So then, do you say that wisdom and health and wealth and the other such things are good, and the opposites of these are bad?

pol.: I do.

soc.: Do you therefore say that things neither good nor bad are such as sometimes have a share in the good, sometimes in the bad, and
468a sometimes in neither, such as sitting, walking, running, and sailing,

46. Many editors prefer the correction "Don't speak evil." "Most agreeable Polus" is *ō lōiste Pōle*, with a jingling assonance that caricatures Polus's and Gorgias's rhetorical devices. Lamb's "peerless Polus" hits the mark (W. R. M. Lamb, *Plato V; Lysis Symposium Gorgias*, Loeb Library [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1925]), p. 327.

and again stones, wood, and the other such things? Don't you say these things? Or do you call some other things neither good nor bad?

POL.: No, these things.

SOC.: Well then, do they do these in-between things, whenever they do them, for the sake of the good ones, or the good things for the sake of the in-between ones?

468b POL.: The in-between things, doubtless, for the sake of the good ones.

SOC.: It is therefore in pursuit of the good that we walk whenever we walk, thinking it to be better; and, the opposite, that we stand still whenever we stand still, for the sake of the same thing, the good; isn't it?

POL.: Yes.

SOC.: So then do we also kill, if we kill someone, and expel and confiscate possessions, thinking it is better for us to do these things than not?

POL.: Certainly.

SOC.: Those who do all these things, therefore, do them for the sake of the good.

POL.: I say so.

SOC.: Have we then agreed that we do not wish those things that we do for the sake of something, but that thing for the sake of which we

468c do these things?

POL.: Very much so.

SOC.: We therefore do not wish to slaughter or to expel from the cities or to confiscate possessions simply like that; but when these things are beneficial for us, we wish to do them, and we do not wish them when harmful. For we wish the good things, as you say, but we do not wish the things that are neither good nor bad, nor the bad things. Isn't that so? Does what I'm saying seem true to you Polus, or not? Why do you not answer?

POL.: True.

468d SOC.: If we agree on these things, then, if someone kills someone or expels him from the city or confiscates possessions, whether he is a tyrant or a rhetor, thinking this to be better for himself, but it happens to be worse, this man doubtless does what seems good to him; doesn't he?

POL.: Yes.

SOC.: Well then, does he therefore also do what he wishes, if these things happen to be bad? Why do you not answer?

POL.: Well, he does not seem to me to do what he wishes.

468e soc.: So then, is there some way in which such a one has great power in that city, if indeed having great power is something good, according to your agreement?

POL.: There is not.

soc.: What I was saying is therefore true, when I said that it is possible for a human being who does in the city what seems good to him not to have great power nor to do what he wishes.

POL.: As if indeed you, Socrates, would not welcome the possibility of your doing what seemed good to you in the city, rather than not, and would not feel envy when you see someone killing whomever it seemed good to him or confiscating possessions or putting him in fetters.

soc.: Do you mean justly or unjustly?

469a POL.: Whichever he does, is it not enviable either way?

soc.: Hush, Polus!⁴⁷

POL.: Why so?

soc.: Because one must not envy either the unenviable or the wretched, but pity them.

POL.: How so? Do the human beings that I am speaking about seem to you to be in such a condition?

soc.: How could they not?

POL.: So then when someone kills whomever it seems good to him, killing justly, does he seem to you to be wretched and pitiable?

soc.: No, not to me at least; but not enviable either.

POL.: Didn't you just say he was wretched?

469b soc.: That is the one who killed unjustly, comrade, and he is pitiable to boot; the one who kills justly is unenviable.

POL.: Surely the one who is put to death unjustly, at any rate, is pitiable and wretched, I suppose.

soc.: Less than he who kills, Polus, and less than he who is justly put to death.

POL.: How is this, Socrates?

soc.: In this way, that doing injustice happens to be the greatest of evils.

POL.: Can it be that this is the greatest? Isn't suffering injustice greater?

soc.: Not in the least.

47. *Euphēmei*: to avoid unlucky words, to keep a religious silence; the opposite of to blaspheme.

POL.: Would you then wish to suffer injustice rather than to do injustice?

469c SOC.: I for one would wish neither; but if it were necessary to do or to suffer injustice, I would choose rather to suffer than to do injustice.

POL.: You would therefore not welcome ruling as tyrant?

SOC.: No, at least not if by ruling as tyrant you mean what I do.

POL.: Well, I mean this same thing as just now: the possibility of doing in the city whatever seems good to oneself, killing and expelling and doing all things in accord with one's opinion.

SOC.: Blessed one, as I now speak, you go ahead and raise objections.

469d If in the crowded marketplace I took a dagger from under my arm and said to you, "Polus, a certain power and an amazing tyranny have just now accrued to me. For if indeed it seems good to me that someone of these human beings that you see must straightaway die, this one shall die, as seems good to me. And if it seems good to me that one of them must have his head smashed, it shall straightaway
469e be smashed; and if his cloak must be torn, it shall be torn. Such great power do I have in this city." If then you distrusted me and I showed you the dagger, upon seeing it you might perhaps say, "Socrates, in this way all people would have great power, since any house that seemed good to you would be burned in this fashion, and the Athenians' dockyards and triremes and all the ships and things public and private." But therefore having great power is not this: to do what seems good to oneself; or does it seem so to you?

POL.: Indeed not—not in this way, at least.

470a SOC.: Can you then say for what reason you blame such power?

POL.: I can.

SOC.: What is it then? Speak!

POL.: Because it is necessary for someone who acts in this manner to pay a penalty.

SOC.: And isn't paying a penalty a bad thing?

POL.: Certainly.

SOC.: So then, you amazing man, it comes back again to light for you that if acting beneficially accompanies the one who does what seems good, it's a good thing, and this, as it seems, is having great power;
470b but if not, it's a bad thing, and having small power. And let us examine this too: don't we agree that sometimes it's better to do those things we were just now speaking of, to kill and drive human beings out and confiscate possessions, but sometimes not?

POL.: Certainly.

SOC.: This, then, as it seems, is agreed on both by you and by me.

POL.: Yes.

SOC.: When, therefore, do you say it is better to do those things? Say what boundary you define.

POL.: Really now, Socrates, you answer this.

470c SOC.: I do indeed assert then, Polus—if it is more pleasant for you to hear from me—that when someone does those things justly, it is better, but when unjustly, worse.

POL.: It's really hard to refute you, Socrates. But would not even a child refute you, and show that what you're saying isn't true?

SOC.: I shall feel much gratitude to the child then, and equal gratitude to you too, if you refute me and release me from drivel. So don't tire of doing good to a man who's a friend, but refute.

POL.: Very well then, Socrates, there's no need to refute you with ancient affairs; for these things that happened just yesterday or the day before are sufficient to refute you and to show that many human beings who do injustice are happy.

SOC.: What sort of things are these?

POL.: You see, I suppose, that that fellow Archelaus⁴⁸ the son of Perdiccas rules Macedonia?

SOC.: If not, at least I hear so.

POL.: Well then, does he seem to you to be happy or wretched?

SOC.: I don't know, Polus; for I have not yet been with the man.

470e POL.: What? You would know if you were with him, but otherwise, on the spot, you do not know that he is happy?

SOC.: By Zeus, indeed I do not.

POL.: It's clear then, Socrates, that you will say you don't know that the great king⁴⁹ is happy either.

48. Archelaus ruled Macedonia from 413 to 399, dying the same year as Socrates. Dodds notes: "Leading poets like Euripides [and] Agathon . . . had accepted his hospitality, exchanging the miseries of war-time Athens for what Aristophanes called 'the fleshpots of the Happy Land' (. . . *Frogs* 85)." Gorgias may also have spent time at his court; Aristotle (*Rhetoric* 1398a) reports that Socrates refused the invitation. Thucydides (2.100.2) reports on Archelaus's building of roads and fortresses and his arranging military forces and equipment stronger than what all the eight previous kings of Macedonia had done; in this respect he bears an important resemblance to Athenian imperial statesmen criticized by Socrates later in this dialogue.

49. The great king, that is, of Persia, is proverbial among Greeks for someone happy according to the most common criteria; see, for example, *Apology of Socrates* 40d–e.

SOC.: And what I'll say is true; for I do not know how he stands in regard to education and justice.

POL.: What? Is the whole of happiness in this?

SOC.: As I say, at any rate, Polus. For I assert that the noble and good⁵⁰ man and woman are happy; the unjust and base, wretched.

471a POL.: Then is this Archelaus wretched according to your argument?

SOC.: If indeed, my friend, he is unjust.

POL.: But how on earth could he not be unjust? No part of the rule that he now has belongs to him at all, since he was born of a woman who was the slave of Alcetas, Perdiccas's brother, and in accordance with the just he was Alcetas's slave; and if he wished to do the just things, he would be a slave to Alcetas and would be happy, according to your argument. But now, how amazingly wretched he has become, since he has done the greatest unjust deeds! First, he sent for this man, his very master and uncle, as if he was going to give back the rule that Perdiccas had taken away from him; having entertained him and his son Alexander (his own first cousin, of about the same age) as guests and got them drunk, he threw them into a wagon and, dragging them away by night, cut their throats and did away with them both. And having done these unjust things, it escaped his notice that he had become most wretched, and he did not repent. But a
471b little later he did not wish to become happy by justly rearing and giving back the rule to his brother, the legitimate son of Perdiccas, a child about seven years old, to whom the rule passed in accordance with the just; but he threw him into a well and drowned him, and told the child's mother, Cleopatra, that he had fallen in and died while chasing a goose. So therefore now, seeing that he has done the greatest unjust deeds in Macedonia, he is the most wretched of all Macedonians, not the most happy; and perhaps there is some one of the Athe-
471c nians, starting with you, who would welcome becoming anybody else whatsoever of the Macedonians rather than Archelaus.

SOC.: Toward the beginning of the speeches, Polus, I praised you in that you seem to me to have been well educated in regard to rhetoric—but I said you have neglected conversing. And now is this the speech by which even a child would refute me? And have I now, as

50. *Kalos kagathos* is a standard formula for something like "the complete gentleman"; the term was also used by the aristocratic party to distinguish themselves from common folk. Dodds notes that he has nowhere else found the phrase applied to women.

you think, been refuted by you through this speech, I who affirm that the one who does injustice is not happy? How can it possibly be, good fellow? On the contrary, I certainly do not agree with you on any one of these things that you are asserting.

471e POL.: No, for you do not want to, since it seems to you as I say.

soc.: You blessed one, you are now attempting to refute me rhetorically, just like those who think they are refuting in the law courts. For in that place, the ones seem to refute the others, when they provide many witnesses of good repute for the speeches that they make, while he who says the opposite provides some one witness or none.

472a But this refutation is worth nothing in regard to the truth; for on some occasions someone would be borne down by the false witness of many who seem to be something. And now concerning the things you are saying, all Athenians and foreigners, save a few, will assert the same things along with you, if you wish to provide witnesses against me to testify that what I'm saying isn't true. Nicias the son of Niceratus and his brothers with him, whose tripods are standing in a row in the precinct of Dionysus, will bear witness for you, if you
472b wish; and if you wish, Aristocrates the son of Scellias, whose beautiful votive offering in turn this is in the precinct of Pythian Apollo; and if you wish, the whole house of Pericles or whatever other family you wish to pick out from the inhabitants here.⁵¹ But I, being one man, do not agree with you. For you do not compel me, but, providing many false witnesses against me, you are attempting to expel me from my substance and the truth. But if I do not provide you yourself, being one man, as the witness in agreement with the things I'm saying, I think I have accomplished nothing worth speaking of
472c concerning the things that our argument is about; nor, I think, have you, unless I, being one man alone, bear witness for you, and you bid all these others farewell. So then, there is this certain manner of refutation, as you and many others think; and there is another, which I, in

51. The witnesses Socrates imagines cover the whole Athenian political spectrum. Pericles and his family (including his nephew Alcibiades) were leaders of the democratic (to some, extreme democratic) party in Athens. Aristocrates was oligarchic (mentioned by Thucydides, 8.89.2, as a member of the oligarchic government of the Four Hundred after the defeat of Athens's Sicilian expedition). Nicias was a moderate: wealthy, of conservative bent, and loyal to the democracy, as were his brothers (Lysias 18.4–12); Nicias's views on education and virtue, as depicted by Plato, may be found in the *Laches*. The sacred offerings of Nicias and Aristocrates evoke their wealth and high standing in the community; no such evidence is cited, perhaps because not needed, regarding Pericles.

turn, think should be. So, having put them beside each other, let us then consider if they differ in some respect from each other. For indeed these things that we are disagreeing about do not happen to be at all small, but are more or less those things that it is most fine to know about and most shameful not to know about; for the chief point of them is either to know or to ignore who is happy and who is
 472d not. The immediately first thing, that our argument now is about: you think that a man who does injustice and is unjust can be blessed, if indeed you think that Archelaus is unjust but happy. Should we not understand you to have such a belief?

POL.: Certainly.

SOC.: But I say it's impossible. This indeed is one thing we disagree on. So be it; the doer of injustice, then, will be happy; will this be so, then, if he meets with just judgment and retribution?

POL.: Not in the least, since thus he would be most wretched.

472e SOC.: But if, then, the doer of injustice does not meet with just judgment, according to your argument he will be happy.

POL.: So I assert.

SOC.: But according to my opinion, at least, Polus, the one who does injustice and is unjust is altogether wretched, but more wretched if he does not pay the just penalty nor meet with retribution when he does injustice, and less wretched if he pays the just penalty and meets with just judgment from gods and human beings.

473a POL.: You are attempting to say strange things indeed, Socrates.

SOC.: And I shall try, at least, to make you too, comrade, say the same things to me: for I consider you a friend. Well now, these then are the things on which we differ; and you consider them too. I was saying earlier, I suppose, that doing injustice is worse than suffering injustice.

POL.: Certainly.

SOC.: But you said suffering injustice is worse.

POL.: Yes.

SOC.: And I asserted that the doers of injustice are wretched, and I was refuted by you.

POL.: Yes, by Zeus!

SOC.: As you think, Polus.

473b POL.: And what I think is true.

SOC.: Perhaps. But you in turn say that the doers of injustice are happy, if they do not pay the just penalty.

POL.: Yes, certainly.

soc.: But I assert that they are most wretched, but those who pay the just penalty are less so. Do you wish to refute this too?

pol.: Well, this is still harder to refute, Socrates, than that.

soc.: Not so, to be sure, Polus, but rather impossible: for what is true is never refuted.

pol.: What do you mean? If someone is caught doing injustice, plotting
 473c to attain tyranny, and having been caught is tortured on the rack and castrated and has his eyes burned out, and having suffered many great mutilations of all kinds himself and having beheld his children and wife suffer them, at the end is impaled or tarred and burned—this man will be happier than if, getting away, he is established as tyrant, rules in the city, and passes his whole life doing whatever he wishes, being enviable and accounted happy by the citi-
 473d zens and by others who are foreigners? These are the things you say it is impossible to refute?

soc.: Now in turn you are frightening us with bogeymen, nobly born Polus, and not refuting; and a moment ago you were calling witnesses. But remind me nevertheless of a little thing. Did you say, if he unjustly plots to attain tyranny?

pol.: I did.

soc.: Then surely neither one of them shall ever be happier, neither the one who has unjustly achieved tyranny nor the one who pays the just penalty—for of two wretched men, one would not be happier—
 473e but the one who gets away and becomes tyrant is nevertheless more wretched. What's this, Polus? Are you laughing? Is this yet another form of refutation—when someone says something, to laugh it down and not to refute?

pol.: Do you not think you have been refuted, Socrates, when you say such things as no one among human beings would assert? Just ask anyone of these men.

soc.: Polus, I am not one of the political men,⁵² and when last year I was by lot a member of the council and my tribe was presiding and I had to put a question to the vote, I gave people a laugh and didn't
 474a know how to put it to the vote.⁵³ So then, now too do not bid me to

52. *Politikoi*: statesmen, politicians, men skilled in politics. At *Apology* 32a–c, Socrates juxtaposes his not holding political office with his service on the council and his consequent role in the trial of the generals at Arginusae in 406.

53. Most scholars, including Dodds on 473e7, consider this to be a self-deprecating reference to Socrates' opposition to the condemnation of the generals in 406. They had won a naval

put the vote to those present, but if you do not have a better refutation than these things, as I was just now saying, give the refutation over to me in my turn, and make trial of the sort of refutation that I think ought to be. For I know how to provide one witness for what I say, the man himself to whom my speech is directed, while I bid the many farewell; and I know how to put the vote to one man, while I
 474b don't converse with the many either. See then if you'll be willing in your turn to give occasion for refutation, by answering the things asked. For surely I think that I and you and the other human beings consider doing injustice worse than suffering injustice, and not paying the just penalty worse than paying it.

POL.: But I, for one, think that neither I nor any other human being does. So you would welcome suffering injustice rather than doing injustice?

SOC.: And so would you, and all others.

POL.: Far from it—not I nor you nor anyone else!

474c SOC.: So then, will you answer?

POL.: Yes, certainly; for I desire to know what on earth you'll say.

SOC.: Now then tell me, in order that you may know, as if I were asking you from the beginning. Which seems to you, Polus, to be worse, doing injustice or suffering injustice?

POL.: Suffering injustice, as far as I'm concerned.

SOC.: And now what about this? Which is more shameful, doing injustice or suffering injustice? Answer!

POL.: Doing injustice.

SOC.: So then it is also worse, if indeed it is more shameful.

POL.: Not in the least.

SOC.: I understand; it looks as though you do not consider fine and
 474d good, and bad and shameful, to be the same thing.

POL.: Indeed not.

SOC.: And what about this? All fine things, such as bodies, colors, shapes, voices, and practices—do you call them fine on each occasion without looking toward anything? First, for example, don't you say that beautiful bodies are beautiful either in reference to the use, for

battle but were accused of failure to gather up the bodies of the dead. Socrates opposed their being tried en masse as illegal, and was the only one of the Pyrtaneis (executive or presiding committee) to stand by this position despite the threats of the rhetors and the anger of the multitude. The fullest account is in Xenophon's *Hellenica* 1.7 (which does not assert, however, that Socrates was individually in the position to put the question to the vote).

this thing that each is useful for, or in reference to some pleasure, if it makes those who look upon it rejoice in the looking? Do you have anything beyond these things to say about the beauty of the body?

474e POL.: No, I don't.

soc.: So then, is it this way with all the other things too, and do you call both shapes and colors beautiful on account of some pleasure or benefit or both?

POL.: I do.

soc.: And isn't it the same with voices and all things relating to music?

POL.: Yes.

soc.: And indeed for things relating to laws and practices—fine ones, that is—doubtless there isn't anything beyond these: their being either beneficial or pleasant or both.

475a POL.: Not in my opinion, at any rate.

soc.: So then, is it also the same with the beauty of sciences?

POL.: Certainly; and you are giving a fine definition now, Socrates, when you define the fine by pleasure and goodness.⁵⁴

soc.: So then the shameful is defined by the opposite, by pain and badness?

POL.: Necessarily.

soc.: Whenever, therefore, one of two fine things is finer, it is finer by surpassing in one of these two things or both, either in pleasure or in benefit or in both.

POL.: Certainly.

soc.: And then whenever one of two shameful things is more shameful, it will be more shameful by surpassing in either pain or badness. Or isn't that necessary?

475b

POL.: Yes.

soc.: Come then, what was being said just now about doing injustice and suffering injustice? Weren't you saying that suffering injustice is worse, but doing injustice is more shameful?

POL.: I was.

soc.: So then, if doing injustice is more shameful than suffering injustice, either it is more painful and would be more shameful by surpassing in pain, or in badness, or in both. Isn't this also necessary?

54. In the *Hippias Major*, Socrates investigates just what the fine (noble, beautiful) is; it proves very difficult to state.

POL.: How could it not be?

475c SOC.: Now first let us consider this: does doing injustice therefore surpass suffering injustice in pain, and do the doers of injustice feel more pain than the sufferers of injustice?

POL.: Surely this, Socrates, is not at all the case.

SOC.: Therefore it does not exceed in pain.

POL.: Indeed not.

SOC.: So then if not in pain, it would further not surpass in both.

POL.: It appears not.

SOC.: So what remains then is surpassing in the other.

POL.: Yes.

SOC.: In badness.

POL.: It looks that way.

SOC.: So then, by surpassing in badness, doing injustice would be worse than suffering injustice.

POL.: That's clear now.

475d SOC.: Now then, don't the great majority of human beings agree, and didn't you agree with us at the earlier time, that doing injustice is more shameful than suffering injustice?

POL.: Yes.

SOC.: And now, at any rate, it has come to light as worse.

POL.: It looks that way.

SOC.: Would you then welcome the worse and the more shameful rather than what is less so? Don't shrink from answering, Polus; for you will suffer no harm. But submit yourself in a nobly born manner to the argument as to a doctor, and answer. Say either yes or no to

475e what I'm asking.

POL.: Well, I would not welcome it, Socrates.

SOC.: And would any other human being?

POL.: It doesn't seem so to me, at least according to this argument.

SOC.: What I was saying was therefore true, that neither I nor you nor any other human being would welcome doing injustice rather than suffering injustice; for it happens to be worse.

POL.: So it appears.

476a SOC.: So you see then, Polus, that when one refutation is put beside the other, they don't look like each other at all; but all other men agree with you except me, whereas for me you, being one man alone, are quite enough both to agree and to bear witness, and I put the vote to you alone and bid the others farewell. And let this matter stand

thus with us. Now after this, let us consider the second thing that we disagreed about: whether it is the greatest of evils for the doer of injustice to pay the just penalty, as you thought, or whether not paying is a greater evil, as I in turn thought. Let's examine it this way: do you call it the same thing, then, for the doer of injustice to pay the just penalty and to be punished⁵⁵ justly?

POL.: I do.

476b soc.: Now then, can you say that not all just things are fine, insofar as they are just? And speak when you have examined it thoroughly.

POL.: Well, they seem so to me, Socrates.

soc.: Now consider this too: if someone does something, must there necessarily also be something that suffers from this one who is doing it?

POL.: It seems so to me, at least.

soc.: So does this thing suffer what the doer does and suffer the sort of thing that the doer does? I mean something of the following sort: if someone beats, is it necessary that something is beaten?

POL.: Necessarily.

476c soc.: And if the beater beats violently or rapidly, must what is beaten be beaten in this way too?

POL.: Yes.

soc.: Is the passive condition of what is beaten, therefore, such as what the beater does?

POL.: Certainly.

soc.: So then too, if someone burns, is it necessary that something be burned?

POL.: How could it not be?

soc.: And if it burns violently or painfully, is what is burned burned in the same way as the burner burns?

POL.: Certainly.

soc.: So then too, if someone cuts, does the same argument hold? For something is cut.

POL.: Yes.

soc.: And if the cut is big or deep or painful, is what is cut cut with
476d such a cut as the cutter cuts?

POL.: It appears so.

55. *Kolazein*: to check, correct, chastise, punish. Aristotle notes that people are trained to avoid *akolasia* (intemperance, licentiousness, immoderation) through having their desires chastened, beginning in childhood (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1119a34–b15).

SOC.: In sum, now, see if you agree on what I was recently saying, concerning all things: that which suffers suffers such a thing as what the doer does.

POL.: Well, I agree.

SOC.: These things now being agreed on, is paying the just penalty suffering something or doing something?

POL.: Of necessity, Socrates, it is suffering.

SOC.: Then is it from someone doing it?

POL.: How could it not be? It is from him who punishes.

476e SOC.: And does he who punishes correctly punish justly?

POL.: Yes.

SOC.: Doing just things, or not?

POL.: Just things.

SOC.: So then does he who is punished and pays the just penalty suffer just things?

POL.: It appears so.

SOC.: And it's been agreed, I suppose, that just things are fine?

POL.: Certainly.

SOC.: Of these men, therefore, the one does fine things, and the other, the one punished, suffers them.

POL.: Yes.

477a SOC.: So if fine, then good? For they are either pleasant or beneficial.

POL.: Necessarily.

SOC.: He who pays the just penalty therefore suffers good things?

POL.: It looks like it.

SOC.: He is therefore benefited?

POL.: Yes.

SOC.: Then what do I suppose the benefit to be? Does he become better in respect to his soul, if he is justly punished?

POL.: That's likely.

SOC.: Is he who pays the just penalty therefore released from badness of soul?

POL.: Yes.

477b SOC.: So is he therefore released from the greatest evil? Consider it this way: do you see any other badness in the constitution of a human being's possessions than poverty?

POL.: No, just poverty.

SOC.: And how about in the body's constitution? Would you say badness is weakness, sickness, ugliness, and such things?

- POL.: I would.
- soc.: So then, do you think there is any baseness in soul too?
- POL.: How could I not?
- soc.: Don't you call this injustice, lack of learning, cowardice, and such things?
- POL.: Yes, certainly.
- 477c soc.: So then, of possessions and body and soul, which are three, have you stated threefold kinds of baseness: poverty, sickness, and injustice?
- POL.: Yes.
- soc.: Which of these kinds of baseness, then, is most shameful? Is it not injustice and, in sum, the soul's baseness?
- POL.: Very much so.
- soc.: If most shameful, then also worst?
- POL.: How do you mean it, Socrates?
- soc.: In this way: what is ever most shameful is most shameful by providing the greatest pain or harm or both, on the basis of the things agreed on earlier.
- POL.: Most certainly.
- soc.: And have we just now agreed that the most shameful thing is
- 477d injustice and the whole baseness of soul?
- POL.: Yes, we agreed.
- soc.: So then is it either most painful and is the most shameful of these by surpassing in painfulness, or in harm, or both?
- POL.: Necessarily.
- soc.: Well then, is being unjust, intemperate, cowardly, and unlearned more painful than being poor and being sick?
- POL.: It doesn't seem so to me, Socrates, at least not on the basis of these things.
- soc.: It is therefore by surpassing the others in some extraordinarily great harm and amazing evil that baseness of soul is most shameful
- 477e of all, since it is not in painfulness, at any rate, as your argument goes.
- POL.: It appears so.
- soc.: But surely, I suppose, what surpasses in the greatest harm would be the greatest evil among the things that are.
- POL.: Yes.
- soc.: Are injustice and intemperance and the other baseness of soul therefore the greatest evil among the things that are?
- POL.: It appears so.

soc.: Now then, what art releases one from poverty? Isn't it money-making?

pol.: Yes.

soc.: And what art releases one from sickness? Isn't it medicine?

478a pol.: Necessarily.

soc.: And what art releases one from baseness and injustice? If you're not well-supplied with answers just like that, consider it this way: where, and to what people, do we lead those who are sick in their bodies?

pol.: To doctors, Socrates.

soc.: And where do we lead those who do injustice and are intemperate?

pol.: Do you mean, to judges?

soc.: Is it so that they will pay the just penalty?

pol.: I say so.

soc.: Now then, don't those who punish correctly punish by using a certain justice?

pol.: That's clear, surely.

478b soc.: Moneymaking therefore releases one from poverty, medicine from sickness, and justice⁵⁶ from intemperance and injustice.

pol.: So it appears.

soc.: Which of these things, then, is finest?

pol.: What things do you mean?

soc.: Moneymaking, medicine, justice.

pol.: Justice, Socrates, excels by much.

soc.: So then, again, does it produce the most pleasure or benefit or both, if indeed it is finest?

pol.: Yes.

soc.: Well then, is it pleasant to be medically treated, and do those who are medically treated rejoice?

pol.: Not in my opinion, at least.

soc.: But it's beneficial, at any rate, isn't it?

56. Here, *dikē*, the root form (in other usages, I have translated it "just judgment" and "just penalty"). Usually, "justice" translates *dikaionē*. The unexplained variation in the terms Socrates uses relating to justice reminds us that his refutation of Polus turns on what sort of thing justice is (or more precisely, what sorts of things doing and suffering injustice are) without specifying what justice is—a rhetorical offense against conversing of which he accused Polus at 448e.

478c POL.: Yes.

soc.: For he is released from a great evil, so that it is profitable to endure the pain and be healthy.

POL.: How could it not be?

soc.: So in this way, then, would the happiest human being in respect to the body be he who is medically treated, or he who is not even sick in the first place?

POL.: He who is not even sick, clearly.

soc.: Then it looks as though happiness was not this, the release from evil, but not even acquiring it in the first place.

POL.: That is so.

478d soc.: And what about this? Of two men who have an evil either in body or in soul, which is more wretched, the one who is medically treated and released from the evil, or the one who is not medically treated and has it?

POL.: As it appears to me, the one who is not medically treated.

soc.: So then, was paying the just penalty the release from the greatest evil, baseness?

POL.: It was indeed.

soc.: For justice doubtless moderates men and makes them more just and comes to be the medicine for baseness.

POL.: Yes.

soc.: Happiest, therefore, is he who does not have badness in his soul,
478e since this came to light as the greatest of evils.

POL.: Yes, clearly.

soc.: And second, doubtless, is he who is released from it.

POL.: It looks that way.

soc.: And this was the man who is admonished, is rebuked, and pays the just penalty.

POL.: Yes.

soc.: Therefore he lives worst who has injustice⁵⁷ and is not released from it.

POL.: So it appears.

soc.: So does this then happen to be he who, doing the greatest unjust deeds and making use of the greatest injustice, brings it about

57. Some editors consider "injustice" probably a gloss because it anticipates the next step in the argument; if so, one should drop it and understand "badness" as the object of "has."

479a that he is neither admonished nor punished nor pays the just penalty, just as you assert Archelaus has managed to do, and the other tyrants and rhetors and potentates?⁵⁸

POL.: It looks that way.

SOC.: For doubtless these men have brought about approximately the same thing, you best of men, as if some one afflicted with the greatest sicknesses brought it about that he not pay the just penalty for the errors concerning his body to the doctors and not be medically treated, fearing, as if he were a child, the burning and cutting, because it's

479b painful. Or doesn't it seem so to you too?

POL.: It does to me.

SOC.: Through ignoring, as it would appear, what sort of thing health and virtue of body are. And indeed from what we have now agreed on, those too who flee justice run the risk of doing something of the same sort, Polus: observing its painfulness, but being blind to its beneficial quality and ignoring how much more wretched a thing than an unhealthy body it is to dwell with a soul that is not healthy but

479c rotten, unjust, and impious; whence they also do everything so as not to pay the just penalty or be released from the greatest evil, preparing for themselves possessions and friends and that they themselves should be as persuasive as possible in speaking. And if the things we have agreed on are true, Polus, do you then perceive the implications of the argument? Or do you wish that we sum them up?

POL.: If it seems good to you in any case.

SOC.: So then, does it follow that injustice and doing injustice are the
479d greatest evil?

POL.: It appears so, at any rate.

SOC.: And surely paying the just penalty came to light as the release from this evil?

POL.: It may be.

SOC.: But not paying is abiding in the evil?

POL.: Yes.

SOC.: Then doing injustice is second among the evils in greatness; and for the doer of injustice not to pay the just penalty is naturally the greatest and first of all evils.

58. A *dunastēs* is one of a small number who collectively rule in a tyrannical manner; a *dunasteia* (see 492b) could be called a narrow arbitrary oligarchy or a junta. The term was used to describe the Thirty Tyrants brought to power with Spartan support at the end of

POL.: It looks that way.

479e SOC.: So then, was it not about this, my friend, that we disagreed? You accounted Archelaus happy for doing the greatest unjust deeds without paying any just penalty, whereas I thought the opposite, that if either Archelaus or any other human being whatsoever did not pay the just penalty when he did injustice, it properly belonged to him to be preeminently wretched among other human beings, and that he who does injustice is always more wretched than he who suffers injustice, and he who does not pay the just penalty is more wretched than he who pays. Weren't these the things that I said?

POL.: Yes.

SOC.: So then has it been proved that they were truly said?

POL.: It appears so.

480a SOC.: So be it. Now then, if these things are true, Polus, what is the great use of rhetoric? For from what has now been agreed on, of course, a man must most of all guard himself, so as not to do injustice, on the grounds that he will have evil enough. Isn't that so?

POL.: Certainly.

SOC.: And if either he himself or someone else of those he cares for does injustice, he will willingly go to that place where he will pay the just penalty as quickly as possible, to the judge as to the doctor, hurrying
480b lest the disease of injustice, become chronic, should make his soul fester with sores underneath and be incurable. Or what do we say, Polus, if our earlier agreements stand? Must not these things of necessity harmonize with those earlier ones in this way, but not in any other?

POL.: What indeed are we to say, Socrates?

SOC.: For speaking in defense of one's own injustice, therefore, or that of parents or comrades or children or fatherland when it does injustice, rhetoric will be of no use to us, Polus; except if someone takes it
480c to be of use for the opposite purpose, supposing that he must most of all accuse himself, and then whoever else of his relatives and friends happens at any time to do injustice, and not hide the unjust deed but bring it into the open, so as to pay the just penalty and become healthy, and compel both himself and others not to play the coward but to grit his teeth⁵⁹ and submit well and courageously as if

the Peloponnesian War. Thucydides at 4.78.3 contrasts dynasty with the rule of equal law (*isonomia*).

59. The Greek idiom literally is "to shut his eyes."

to a doctor for cutting and burning—pursuing what’s good and fine, not taking account of what’s painful, and if he has done unjust deeds
 480d worthy of blows, submitting to beating; if worthy of bonds, submitting to being bound; if worthy of a fine, paying it; if worthy of banishment, going into exile; and if worthy of death, dying;—himself being the first accuser both of himself and of others that are relatives, and using rhetoric for this purpose, so that, their unjust deeds having become manifest, they may be released from the greatest evil, injustice. Are we to speak thus or are we not, Polus?

480e POL.: To me, Socrates, they seem strange indeed; but perhaps you make them agree with the things said before.

SOC.: So then, must either those earlier things too be undone, or must these of necessity follow?

POL.: Yes, that’s the way this is.

SOC.: And turning on the other hand to the opposite, if indeed one must ever do evil to someone, either enemy or whomever—if only one does not oneself suffer injustice from the enemy, for of this one must beware—if the enemy does injustice to someone else, one must provide in every way, by acting and by speaking, that he not pay the just
 481a penalty nor go to the judge. And if he does go, one must contrive that the enemy get away and not pay the just penalty, but if he has stolen much gold, that he not give it back but keep it and spend it unjustly and godlessly on himself and his; and if he has done unjust deeds worthy of death, that he shall not die—above all that he never die but shall
 481b be deathless in being wicked, and if not this, that he shall live for as long a time as possible in being such. For such things, Polus, rhetoric seems to me to be useful, since for him who isn’t going to do injustice, there doesn’t seem to me to be any great use for it, if indeed there even is some use, which nowhere in the earlier discussion came to light.

CAL.: Tell me, Chaerephon, is Socrates serious about these things or is he joking?⁶⁰

CHAE.: To me, Callicles, he seems to be extraordinarily serious; but there’s nothing like asking the man himself.⁶¹

60. Several important words are related to the root *pais*, child. *Paizein* means joking, sporting, or playing. *Paidia* is play. *Paideia* is education. *Ta paidika* is a boy or young man with whom an older man has an erotic relationship; though the usual translation is “favorite,” I have translated “boyfriend,” but it should be noted that the Greek conveys no implication of a reciprocal relationship.

61. Chaerephon’s echo of Callicles’ own language at 447c suggests that the dialogue is to begin anew here.

- CAL.: By the gods, I certainly desire to do so! Tell me, Socrates, are we
 481c to take it that you are now being serious or joking? For if you are serious and these things you are saying happen to be true, wouldn't the life of us human beings have been turned upside down and don't we do, as it would appear, all the opposite things to what we ought?
- soc.: Callicles, if human beings did not have some feeling⁶² that was the same—some having one and others another—but if some one of us suffered some private feeling different from what the others feel,
 481d it would not be too easy to point out one's own affection to the other. I say this bearing in mind that you and I now happen to have suffered something that is the same: we are two lovers,⁶³ each in love with two things—I with Alcibiades the son of Cleinias⁶⁴ and with philosophy, and you with two things, the Athenian people and the son of Pyrilampes.⁶⁵ And so I perceive you on each occasion unable, terribly clever though you are, to contradict what your boyfriends
 481e say and how they say things are, but you turn yourself around up and down. In the assembly, if, as you are saying something, the Athenian people denies that it is so, you turn around and say what it wishes; and also in regard to this beautiful youth, the son of Pyrilampes, you have suffered other things of this sort. For you are not able to oppose either the proposals or the speeches of your boyfriends; so that if, when on each occasion you say the things you say on account of them, someone was amazed at how strange they are,

62. *Pathos*, the same word rendered "passive condition" at 476c, could also be translated here "experience," but except as noted I have reserved that term for *empeiria* (as at 448c). "Affection" translates *pathēma*. I often translate the related verb "suffer."

63. The word here is a participle cognate with *erōs*; see note on *erōs* and *phil-* at 513c.

64. Alcibiades was wealthy, of a prominent family (he was the nephew of Pericles), beautiful, gifted, and ambitious. He supported the Sicilian expedition, through which Athens resumed the Peloponnesian War in 415, thus putting an end to the Peace of Nicias, and was named one of the three generals. Recalled to face charges of mutilating sacred statues of Hermes erected at various places throughout Athens and of violating the sanctity of the Eleusinian Mysteries, and fearing death from his political opponents, he went over to the Spartan side. Later he negotiated with Persia, Sparta, and Athens, and eventually was recalled by Athens to a position of leadership. He is the central character in the second half of Thucydides' *History*. Two Platonic dialogues carry his name as title. Plato recounts Alcibiades' drunken, frank, eloquent speech about his relation to Socrates in the *Symposium* (212d–223a).

65. The Athenian *dēmos* and *Dēmos* the son of Pyrilampes, who was famous for his beauty and also for lack of intelligence (Aristophanes, *Wasps* 98 and fragment of Eupolis's *Poleis* [213 Kock]). "People" translates *dēmos*, but it should be noted that, whereas "people" has an all-inclusive connotation, Greek *dēmos* tends to emphasize the lower classes as distinguished from the nobility, wealthy, or great.

you might perhaps say to him, if you wished to speak the truth, that
 482a unless someone will make your boyfriends desist from these speeches,
 you will never stop saying these things either. Consider accordingly
 that you must hear other things of this sort from me too, and do not
 be amazed that I say them, but stop my boyfriend, philosophy, from
 saying them. For, my friend and comrade, philosophy always says
 what you now hear from me and is much less capricious with me
 than the other boyfriend: for this fellow of Cleinias's family presents
 various speeches at various times, whereas philosophy always pre-
 482b sents the same and says what you are now amazed at—and you were
 present yourself to hear the things said. So then either refute that one,
 as I was saying just a while ago, by showing that doing injustice and
 not paying the just penalty when one does injustice are not the ut-
 most of all evils; or else, if you leave this unrefuted—by the dog, the
 god of the Egyptians!—Callicles will not agree with you, Callicles,
 but will be dissonant in his whole life. And yet I think, you best of
 men, it is superior⁶⁶ that my lyre be out of tune and dissonant, and
 the chorus I might provide for the public, and that most human be-
 482c ings disagree with me and say contradictory things, rather than that
 I, being one man, should be discordant with myself and say contra-
 dictory things.

CAL.: Socrates, you seem to me to act like a youth in the arguments,⁶⁷
 like the popular speaker you truly are; and now you make this pop-
 ular speech since Polus has suffered the same experience⁶⁸ that he ac-
 cuses Gorgias of suffering in regard to you. For doubtless he said that
 when Gorgias was asked by you whether, when someone who wished
 482d to learn rhetoric but who did not know the just things came to him,
 Gorgias would teach him, Gorgias felt ashamed and said he would
 teach, on account of the custom of human beings, in that they would
 be angry if someone said no. Now, through this agreement he was
 compelled to say things that contradicted himself; and this is the
 very thing you are fond of. And at that time he laughed at you, cor-
 rectly, at least as it seems to me; but now in turn he has suffered this

66. *Kreittōn* means stronger, superior, better. I have usually used "stronger," but sometimes "superior." The famous old accusation against Socrates of "making the weaker argument stronger" (*Apology* 19b) uses this same word, whose range of meanings plays a key role in Socrates' upcoming refutation of Callicles.

67. That is, to display the excess or extravagance of youth; compare Socrates' use of the same charge against Lysias (*Phaedrus* 235a).

68. *Pathos*: see note at 481c.

same thing. And I for one do not admire Polus on this very point, that he conceded to you that doing injustice is more shameful than suffering injustice; for from this agreement he himself in turn got his feet entangled and his mouth gagged by you in the speeches, since he felt ashamed to say what he thought. For, Socrates, you really lead the discussion into such tiresome things, suited to a popular speaker—while claiming to pursue the truth—things that are not fine by nature, but by convention. And in most cases these things are opposed to each other, nature and convention;⁶⁹ if, therefore, someone feels

482e

483a ashamed and doesn't dare say what he thinks, he is compelled to say contradictory things. And now, having thoroughly understood this piece of wisdom, you work evil in the arguments: if someone speaks of things according to convention, you slip in questions about things according to nature, and if he speaks of the things of nature, you ask about the things of convention. Just as, for an immediate example, in these matters of doing injustice and suffering injustice, when Polus spoke of the more shameful according to convention, you pursued the argument according to nature.⁷⁰ For by nature, everything is more shameful that is also worse, such as⁷¹ suffering injustice, whereas by convention doing injustice is more shameful. Nor does this mis-

483b fortune, suffering injustice, belong to a man,⁷² but to some slave for whom it is superior to die than to live, who, suffering injustice and being trampled in the mud, is unable to help himself or anyone else he cares for. But, I think, those who set down the laws are the weak human beings and the many. It is therefore in reference to themselves and their own advantage that they set down laws and praise their

483c praises and blame their blames: frightening away the more forceful human beings and those with power to have more, so that they won't have more than themselves, they say that taking more is shameful

69. *Nomos*, translated "law" or "convention," includes written law, unwritten law, custom, and prevalent opinion. The root idea involves distribution, allotment (verb *nemein*). Pre-Socratic philosophy discovered and elaborated the difference between convention and nature, *phusis*, whose related verb means "to grow." Things that exist by nature, such as fire, are the same here and in Persia, whereas things that exist by convention, such as burial practices, differ (see Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 5.1134b).

70. The manuscripts read *nomon* instead of *logon* ("argument"), which would yield the puzzling meaning "you pursued convention according to nature."

71. Some editors, including Dodds, add this "such as." Without it, the apposition of "suffering injustice" with "everything" is not quite logical (which, if the correct text, might reflect the passionate character of Callicles' speech).

72. The term is the emphatically male *anēr* (see note at 447c).

and unjust, and that doing injustice is this—seeking to have more than the others. For they are quite contented, I think, if they themselves have an equal share, since they are lowlier.

Now it's on account of these things that this, seeking to have more than the many, is said by convention to be unjust and shameful, and they call it doing injustice. But nature herself, I think, reveals that this
 483d very thing is just, for the better to have more than the worse and the more powerful than the less powerful. And it is clear in many places that these things are so: both among the other animals and in whole cities and races⁷³ of human beings, the just has been decided thus, for the stronger to rule the weaker and to have more. Indeed, making use of what kind of justice did Xerxes lead his army against Greece,
 483e or his father against the Scythians?⁷⁴ Or one could tell of myriad other such cases. Indeed I think these men do these things according to the nature of the just, and yes, by Zeus, according to the law of nature⁷⁵—though perhaps not according to this one that we set down. By molding the best and most forceful of us, catching them young, like lions, subduing them by charms and bewitching them, we re-
 484a duce them to slavery, saying that one must have an equal share and that this is the noble and the just. But, I think, if a man having a sufficient nature comes into being, he shakes off and breaks through all these things and gets away, trampling underfoot our writings, spells, charms, and the laws that are all against nature, and the slave rises
 484b up to be revealed as our master; and there the justice of nature shines forth. And Pindar too seems to me to point to what I'm saying in the ode in which he says that "Law, the king of all mortals and immortals"; and this indeed, he says, "leads, making what is most violent just, with highest hand; I judge so from the works of Heracles, since—without payment—. . ." he says something like this—for I do not know the ode—he says that he drove off the cows though he

73. *Genos*: family, posterity, tribe, clan, race, stock, kin; sometimes a subdivision of *ethnos* (nation, people), though here perhaps the same.

74. Xerxes' invasion of Greece (partly to avenge the defeat at Marathon of his father's earlier invasion) ended in naval defeat at Salamis and defeat on land at Plataea; in the aftermath of these Persian defeats, Athens began its move under the leadership of Themistocles toward imperial power. Darius's invasion of Scythia also ended in defeat. On Persian kings, see note at 470e. One could imagine a rather more moralistic interpretation of these same facts, contrary to Callicles' point.

75. This phrase "law of nature," first attested here in Greek literature, in view of the distinction between law (or convention) and nature, has a paradoxical character, of which Callicles' oath seems to show him to be somehow aware.

484c didn't buy them nor did Geryon give them, on the grounds that this is the just by nature, that the worse and weaker men's cows and all other possessions belong to the better and stronger man.⁷⁶

The truth, therefore, is thus, and you will know it if you proceed to greater things, once you have let philosophy drop. For philosophy, to be sure, Socrates, is a graceful thing, if someone engages in it in due measure at the proper age; but if he fritters his time away in it further than is needed, it is the corruption of human beings.⁷⁷ For even if he is of an altogether good nature and philosophizes far along in age, he must of necessity become inexperienced in all those things that one
 484d who is to be a noble and good man, and well reputed, must have experience of. And indeed they become inexperienced in the laws of the city, in the speeches one must use to associate with human beings in dealings both privately and publicly, in human pleasures and desires, and in sum they become all in all inexperienced in customs and characters. Whenever, therefore, they enter into some private or po-
 484e litical action, they become ridiculous; just as, I think, political men are ridiculous, whenever they in turn enter into your pastimes and speeches. For Euripides' saying comes to pass: each one is brilliant in this, and presses on to this, "allotting the greatest part of the day to
 485a this, where he happens to be at his best." And he flees from wherever he is undistinguished and reviles this, but praises the other thing out of goodwill toward himself, thinking that in this manner he praises himself. But I think the most correct thing is to partake of both. It is fine to partake of philosophy to the extent that it is for the sake of education, and it is not shameful to philosophize when one is a lad. But when a human being who is already rather older still philosophizes, the thing becomes ridiculous, Socrates, and I feel toward those who
 485b philosophize something very much like what I feel toward those who mumble and play around childishly. For whenever I see a small child, to whom it is still proper to talk in this manner, mumbling and playing around, I rejoice and it appears graceful to me, befitting a free man, and suitable to the small child's age; whereas when I hear a little boy talking distinctly, the thing seems to me to be rather disagreeable, vexes my ears, and seems to me to be something slavish.

76. Of this poem by the fifth-century Theban poet Pindar, only fragments are preserved; the same fragment is referred to in the *Laws* at 690b and quoted at 715a. See note at *Gorgias* 487c.

77. This corruption uses the same root word as the corrupting that Socrates will later be accused of inflicting on Athens's youth.

485c But whenever one hears a man mumbling or sees him playing around childishly, it appears ridiculous, unmanly, and deserving of a beating. So then, I feel this same thing toward those who philosophize, too. For seeing philosophy in a young lad, I admire it, and it seems to me fitting, and I consider this human being to be a free man, whereas the one who does not philosophize I consider illiberal, someone who
 485d will never deem himself worthy of any fine and noble⁷⁸ affair. But whenever I see an older man still philosophizing and not released from it, this man, Socrates, surely seems to me to need a beating. For as I was saying just now, it falls to this man, even if he is of an altogether good nature, to become unmanly through fleeing the central area of the city and the agoras, in which the poet says men “become highly distinguished,”⁷⁹ and through sinking down into living the
 485e rest of his life whispering with three or four lads in a corner, never to give voice to anything free or great or sufficient.

But I, Socrates, am fairly friendly toward you; so I have now probably felt what Euripides’ Zethus felt toward Amphion, of which I made mention.⁸⁰ And indeed some things come upon me to say to you such as that man said to his brother, that “You are careless, Socrates, of the things that you ought to take care of, and having received by fate so noble a soul’s nature, you make yourself conspicuous
 486a in a shape belonging to a lad; and you would not contribute a speech correctly to the councils of justice, nor cry out something probable or persuasive, nor advise any new proposal on another’s behalf.” And yet, Socrates my friend—and do not be annoyed at me, for I shall speak with goodwill toward you—does it not seem to you to be a shameful thing to be in such a condition as I think you and the others are, who are forever pushing further on in philosophy? For now, if someone seized you or anybody else of that sort of people and carried you off to prison, claiming that you were doing an injustice when you were not, you know that you would not have anything of
 486b use to do for yourself, but you would be dizzy and gaping, without anything to say; and when you stood up in the law court, happening

78. “Noble” here and in 485e is *gennaïos*, which I’ve usually translated “nobly born” (with “noble” usually reserved for *kalos*).

79. The poet, of course, is Homer: *Iliad* 9.441. “Agora” refers both to marketplaces and to places of public assembly, with the latter dominant here. See the mention of the agora at 447a.

80. Euripides’ lost play *Antiope* presented a debate between the active life represented by the shepherd Zethus and the artistic or contemplative life represented by his brother, Amphion.

to face a very lowly and vicious accuser, you would die, if he wished to demand the death penalty for you. Yet "how can this be a wise thing," Socrates, "an art that took a man⁸¹ with a good nature and made him worse," unable to help himself or to save either himself or
 486c anyone else from the greatest dangers, but liable to be stripped of his whole substance by his enemies and to live absolutely unhonored⁸² in the city? To say something rather rude—it is possible to strike such a man a crack on the jaw without paying the just penalty. Rather, good man, be persuaded by me, stop refuting, "practice the good music" of affairs, and practice there whence "you will be reputed to think intelligently, giving up to others these refined subtleties"—whether one must say they are silliness or drivel—"from which you will dwell in an empty house," envying not the men who make refutations over these small matters, but those who have livelihood, reputation, and many other good things.⁸³

soc.: If I happened to have a golden soul, Callicles, would you not think I'd be pleased to find one of those stones with which they test gold—the best such stone, so that when I had applied the soul to it, if that stone agreed with me that the soul had been finely taken care of, I would at last be on the point of knowing well that I am in sufficiently good condition and have no further need for another touchstone?

486e CAL.: In regard to what now do you ask this, Socrates?

soc.: I shall tell you now. I think that, having fallen in with you, I have fallen in with a godsend of that sort.

CAL.: How so?

soc.: Know well that, if you agree with me on the things that my soul holds opinions about, these at last are the true things themselves. For
 487a I am reflecting that he who is going to make a sufficient test of a soul's living correctly or not must in fact have three things, all of which you have: knowledge, goodwill, and outspokenness. For I fall in with many who are not able to test me on account of not being

81. The poetic word *phōs*, which is often contrasted as mortal with immortal gods, suggests another quotation from *Antiope*.

82. The word carries also the meaning of being deprived of legal rights in the city, in which case one could be subject to summary arrest and jailing (as Callicles has just suggested at 486a):

83. This critique of Socrates' manner of investigating and refuting reminds of the very similar criticism stated by the Sophist Hippias near the end of the *Hippias Major* (304a–b), in which Socrates and Hippias seek to state what the beautiful (noble, fine) is.

wise as you are; and others are wise but are not willing to tell me the truth on account of not caring for me as you do; and these two foreigners here, Gorgias and Polus, are wise and friends of mine, but rather too lacking in outspokenness and too sensitive to shame, more so than is needful. And how could they not be? Since indeed they have advanced so far into the sense of shame that—on account of feeling shame—each one of them dares to contradict himself in front of many human beings, and this concerning the greatest things. But you have all those things that the others do not have; for you have been sufficiently educated, as many of the Athenians would say, and

487c you are of goodwill toward me. What evidence do I use? I shall tell you. I know, Callicles, that four of you have become partners in wisdom: you, Teisandros of Aphidnae, Andron son of Androtion, and Nausicydes of Cholargos.⁸⁴ And once I overheard you taking counsel on how far one must practice wisdom, and I know that some opinion of the following sort prevailed among you: you urged each other not

487d to be eager to philosophize to the point of precision, but to be cautious lest, by becoming wiser beyond what is needful, you should be corrupted unawares. Since, therefore, I hear you giving the same counsels to me as to your own closest comrades, it is sufficient evidence for me that you are truly of goodwill toward me. And that you are indeed able to be outspoken and not to feel shame, you yourself assert, and the speech that you were making a little while ago agrees with

487e you. So this is how it stands now about these things: when you agree with me on something in the speeches, this will at last have been sufficiently tested by you and me, and there will be no further need to carry it back to another touchstone. For you would never have conceded it either through a lack of wisdom or through an excess of sense of shame, nor again would you concede it to deceive me; for you are a friend to me, as you yourself say. Your and my agreement, therefore, will really at last attain the goal of truth. And the investigation about the things for which you censured me, Callicles, is the finest of all: what sort of man one ought to be and what one ought to pursue

84. Nothing certain is known of the first and third mentioned; they are probably wealthy young men. Andron son of Androtion was one of the oligarchic Four Hundred (see note at 472b). He is present at the gathering of Sophists at Callias's house depicted in the *Protagoras*, among those surrounding the Sophist Hippias (315c). At a crucial juncture of the conversation Hippias states a view like Pindar's as quoted by Callicles: "I consider you all kin and relatives and citizens by nature, not by law; for by nature like is kin to like, but law, being the tyrant of human beings, violently forces many things against nature" (337c–d).

488a and how far, for both an older and a younger man. For if I am doing something incorrectly in the course of my life, know well that I do not make this error voluntarily but through my lack of learning. So then, just as you began to admonish me, do not give up but point out to me sufficiently what this is that I must pursue and in what way I might acquire it. And if you catch me agreeing with you now but at a later time not doing those things that I have agreed on, consider me
 488b a complete dolt and never admonish me any more later on, on the grounds that I'm worth nothing.

Now take it up again for me from the beginning. How do both you and Pindar say the just stands—the just according to nature, that is? That the stronger carry off by violence the weaker men's things, that the superior rule the worse men, and that the better have more than the lowlier?⁸⁵ You're not saying that the just is anything else, or do I remember correctly?

CAL.: Indeed I said these things then and I say them now.

soc.: And do you call the same man superior and stronger? For at
 488c that time I was surely not able to understand from you what on earth you mean. Are you calling the mightier men stronger, and the feebler men ought to obey the mightier man, as in my opinion you were pointing out at that time, saying how big cities advance against small ones in accordance with the just by nature, because they are stronger and mightier, on the grounds that the stronger and mightier and superior are the same thing? Or is it possible for one to be superior but weaker and feebler, and to be stronger but more vicious? Or is the
 488d boundary of the superior and the stronger the same? Define this very thing distinctly for me: are the stronger and the superior and the mightier the same or different?⁸⁶

CAL.: Well, I say to you distinctly that they are the same.

soc.: So then, are the many stronger than the one according to nature? They surely do set down laws upon the one, as you too were saying just now.

CAL.: How could they not be?

soc.: The lawful usages of the many, therefore, are those of the stronger.

85. *Beltiōn* ("superior") and *ameinōn* ("better") are synonymous, though perhaps the former has a stronger connotation of social or moral superiority.

86. Socrates makes similar use of the broad range of meaning of *kreittōn* ("stronger," see note at 482b) in the first step of his refutation of Thrasymachus's assertion that justice is the advantage of the stronger (*Republic* 338c–d).

CAL.: Certainly.

488e SOC.: So then, are they those of the superior? For the stronger are, I suppose, superior, according to your argument.⁸⁷

CAL.: Yes.

SOC.: So then are the lawful usages of these people fine according to nature, since they are stronger?

CAL.: I say so.

SOC.: Well then don't the many customarily hold, as again you were saying just now, that having an equal share is just and that doing injustice is more shameful than suffering injustice? Are these things so or not? And don't you in turn get caught here feeling shame. Do the many customarily hold, or not, that having an equal share but not having more is just, and that doing injustice is more shameful than suffering injustice? Do not begrudge answering me this, Callicles, so that, if you agree with me, I may at last receive confirmation from you, seeing that a man sufficient at discerning things has agreed.

CAL.: Well, the many, at any rate, customarily hold this view.

SOC.: It is not only by convention, therefore, that doing injustice is more shameful than suffering injustice, and that having an equal share is just; but also by nature. So probably you were not saying true things earlier and you did not accuse me correctly when you said that convention and nature are opposed, and that I too have observed this and then work evil in the arguments, by leading someone toward convention if he speaks according to nature, and toward nature if he speaks according to convention.

CAL.: This man here will not stop driveling! Tell me, Socrates, are you not ashamed at your age to hunt after words and, if someone errs in his utterance, to take this as a godsend? Do you think I mean that being stronger men is anything other than being superior men? Haven't I long been saying to you that I assert the superior and the stronger to be the same? Or do you think I am saying that, if a rabble of slaves and human beings of all sorts, worth nothing except perhaps for the exertion of bodily might, was collected together, and if these people asserted some things, these things are lawful?

SOC.: So be it, most wise Callicles. Is this what you're saying?

CAL.: Yes indeed.

87. The manuscripts read *polu* rather than *pou*; this would then read "the stronger are much superior, according to your argument."

489d soc.: Well, you demonic man,⁸⁸ I myself have also long been guessing that by the stronger you mean some such thing, and I've been asking in eager longing to know distinctly what you mean. For doubtless you, at any rate, do not consider two as superior to one, nor your slaves as superior to you, because they are mightier than you. But tell us again from the beginning, what on earth do you mean by the superior men, since you don't mean the mightier? And, you amazing man, instruct me more gently, so that I won't stop attending your school.

489e cal.: You are being ironical, Socrates.⁸⁹

soc.: By Zethus, whom you made use of just now to say many ironical things toward me! But come, tell us: who do you say are the superior men?

cal.: The better men, I say.

soc.: Now then do you see that you yourself are saying words but making nothing clear? Won't you say whether by the superior and stronger men you mean the more intelligent⁹⁰ or certain others?

cal.: Yes indeed, by Zeus, I do mean these, and emphatically so!

490a soc.: Many times, therefore, one man who thinks intelligently is stronger according to your argument than ten thousand who do not, and this man ought to rule, and those be ruled, and the ruler have more than the ruled; for this in my opinion is what you wish to say—and I am not hunting after little phrases⁹¹—if the one is stronger than the ten thousand.

cal.: This is indeed what I mean. For I think that the just by nature is this, for one who is superior and more intelligent both to rule and to have more than the lowlier ones.

88. A *daimōn* is some kind of superhuman being; one might translate *daimonios* "divine," but in the *Symposium* Socrates presents the view that *daimones* (such as *Erōs*, [erotic] love) are beings in between, and mediating between, gods and human beings. Earlier in this dialogue (456a), he suggested that the power of rhetoric might be demonic. The most frequent word for happy, *eudaimōn*, would mean having a good *daimōn*.

89. The complex notion of irony may involve speaking with twofold meaning and speaking so as to hide a claim to superiority; in the present context it doubtless contrasts with the outspokenness discussed by Socrates at 487b.

90. *Phronimos*, a rather new word first found in Sophocles' *Ajax*, was later used by Aristotle for the prudent man or the man of practical wisdom. Calicles used the related verb *phronein* at 486c in urging Socrates to seek the reputation of "thinking intelligently" (or prudently or sensibly). *Sōphrōn* (which I usually translate "moderate" but must sometimes render "of sound mind," as opposed to mad) shares the same root *phrēn* (heart, mind, wits).

91. Accepting Badham's conjecture *rhēmatia* (reported by Dodds); the manuscript text might yield the sense, "not hunting [you] with a phrase."

490b soc.: Stop right there. What on earth are you saying now in turn? If we are many crowded together in the same place, just as now, and we have much food and drink in common, and we are of all sorts, some mighty, some feeble, and one of us, being a doctor, is more intelligent about these things, and—as is likely—he is mightier than some, feeble than others—then will not this man, being more intelligent than we, be superior and stronger in regard to these things?

CAL.: Certainly.

490c soc.: Should he then have more of this food than we, because he is superior? Or ought that man through his ruling to distribute it all, and he should not take more by consuming it all and using it up for his own body—if he is not to pay a fine⁹²—but should have more than some and less than others? And if he happens to be feeblest of all, should the most superior man have the least of all, Callicles? Isn't this how it is, good man?

CAL.: You are talking of food and drink and doctors and drivel; but

490d this is not what I mean.

soc.: Aren't you saying that the more intelligent man is superior? Say yes or no.

CAL.: I am.

soc.: Well, ought not the superior man to have more?

CAL.: Not of food, though, nor of drink.

soc.: I understand, but perhaps of clothing; and the man most skilled in weaving ought to have the biggest cloak and go around clothed in the most numerous and most beautiful ones?

CAL.: What's this about cloaks?⁹³

soc.: Well, in regard to shoes, clearly the most intelligent and most
490e superior man in these things ought to take more. Perhaps the cobbler ought to have the biggest shoes and walk around shod with the most numerous ones.

CAL.: What's this about shoes? You keep on driveling.

soc.: But if you don't mean things of this sort, perhaps things of the following sort: a man skilled in farming, for example, intelligent about land, and fine and good—this man now ought perhaps to take more seeds and use as much seed as possible for his own land.

CAL.: How you always say the same things, Socrates!

92. Or suffer loss—that is, one supposes, in health.

93. Literally, "What sort of cloaks?" This form of riposte, frequent in comedy, has also the force of an exclamation of disbelief—perhaps "Cloaks, my foot!"

soc.: Not only that, Callicles, but also about the same things.⁹⁴

491a CAL.: By the gods, you simply⁹⁵ always talk without stopping about cobblers, clothiers, cooks, and doctors, as if our speech were about these people!

soc.: So won't you then say whom it is about? In having more of what things does the stronger and more intelligent man justly take more? Or will you neither suffer me to suggest nor speak for yourself?

CAL.: But I have been saying it for a long time now. First, then, by those who are stronger I mean neither cobblers nor cooks, but those
491b who are intelligent in regard to the affairs of the city and in what way they may be well governed—and not only intelligent but also courageous, being sufficient to accomplish what they intend and not flinching through softness of soul.

soc.: Do you see, most superior Callicles, how you do not accuse me of the same things as I do you? For you assert that I always say the same things and find fault with me; but I assert the opposite of you, that you never say the same things about the same things, but at that
491c time you were defining the superior and stronger as the mightier, and again as the more intelligent, and now in turn you arrive with something else: certain more courageous men are said by you to be the stronger and superior. Well, good man, speak and have done:⁹⁶ who on earth do you say are the superior and stronger, and in regard to what?

CAL.: But indeed I have already said: those who are intelligent in regard to the affairs of the city and courageous. For it is fitting that
491d these men rule the cities; and the just is this, that these, the rulers, have more than the others, the ruled.

soc.: But what in relation to themselves, comrade?

CAL.: What in the world?

soc.: Rulers or ruled?

CAL.: What do you mean?

soc.: I mean that each one himself rules himself. Or is there no need of this, that he rule himself, but only that he rule the others?

94. A strikingly similar exchange takes place between the Sophist Hippias and Socrates in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* (4.4.6). Whereas intellectuals (whether sophists or rhetoricians), like Hippias there, often pride themselves on the novelty of what they have to say, Socrates stresses (482a, 509a) that philosophy says ever the same things.

95. *Atechnōs* (simply, absolutely) has the root meaning "without art."

96. More literally, "be released [from it]."

CAL.: What do you mean, ruling himself?

491e SOC.: Nothing complicated⁹⁷ but just what the many mean: being moderate and in control of oneself, ruling the pleasures and desires that are in oneself.

CAL.: What a pleasant fellow you are—you're saying that the moderate are the foolish!

SOC.: How so? There's nobody who would not understand that this is not what I'm saying.

CAL.: Yes, it most certainly is, Socrates. Since how would a human being become happy while being a slave to anyone at all? No, this is the fine and just according to nature, which I am now telling you outspokenly: the man who will live correctly must let his own desires be
 492a as great as possible and not chasten them, and he must be sufficient to serve them, when they are as great as possible, through courage and intelligence, and to fill them up with the things for which desire arises on each occasion. But this, I think, is not possible for the many; wherefore they blame such men because of shame, hiding their own incapacity, and they say that intemperance is surely a shameful thing (as I was saying earlier), enslaving the human beings who are superior in their nature; unable themselves to supply satisfaction for their
 492b pleasures, they praise moderation and justice because of their own unmanliness. Because, for those for whom it is possible from the beginning to be either sons of kings or themselves by nature sufficient to supply for themselves some rule or tyranny or dynasty—what in truth would be more shameful and worse than moderation and justice for these human beings, and that they, who can enjoy the good things (and with no one blocking their path), should impose a master on themselves, the law and speech and blame of the many human
 492c beings? Or how would they not have become wretched under the sway of this fine thing, justice and moderation, when they distribute nothing more to their own friends than to enemies—and this while ruling in their own city? But in truth, Socrates, which you claim to pursue, this is how it is: luxury, intemperance, and freedom, when they have support—this is virtue and happiness; and those other things, the fine pretenses, the agreements of human beings against nature, are drivel and worth nothing.

492d SOC.: In no ignobly born manner, at any rate, Calicles, do you forge ahead in speech, outspokenly. For you are now saying distinctly

97. Literally, "multicolored" (a term Socrates applies to democracy in the *Republic*, at 557c).

what the others think but are unwilling to say. I therefore beg of you in no way to slacken, so that how one must live may really become thoroughly clear. And tell me: do you assert that one must not chasten the desires, if one is to be such as one should, but let them be as great as possible and prepare satisfaction for them from any place
 492e whatsoever, and that this is virtue?

CAL.: That is what I assert.

SOC.: Then those who need nothing are not correctly said to be happy?

CAL.: No, for in this way stones and corpses would be happiest.

SOC.: But surely the life of those you are talking about is also terrible. And indeed I would not be amazed if what Euripides says is true in these lines, where he says, "Who knows, if living is being dead, and
 493a being dead is living?"⁹⁸ And perhaps really we are dead; for I'm sure I have also heard from some one of the wise that we are now dead and our body is a tomb,⁹⁹ and this part¹⁰⁰ of the soul in which the desires exist happens to be such as to be persuaded and to change around up and down. And so a certain subtly refined myth-telling man, probably some Sicilian or Italian,¹⁰¹ playing on its name, via *persuadable* and *persuaded*, named it *jar*,¹⁰² and named the thoughtless
 493b *uninitiated*,¹⁰³ and he said that this part of the uninitiated men's soul to which the desires belong, the intemperate and leaky part,¹⁰⁴ was a perforated jar—making the likeness on account of its insatiableness. This man surely points out what contradicts you, Callicles: that of those in Hades—meaning the unseen¹⁰⁵—these, the uninitiated, are

98. The lines come from either the *Phrixus* or the *Polyidos*, both lost; Aristophanes mocks the lines in the *Frogs* (1082, 1477–78).

99. The Greek has a fine sound: *to sōma . . . sēma*.

100. "Part" is added, but "aspect" could be equally appropriate; the Greek is just *touto* ("this [thing]").

101. Dodds argues that one must take care to distinguish the myth's author, who probably composed an old religious poem (quite possibly Orphic) about the sufferings of the uninitiated in Hades, from the wise man (most likely a Pythagorean) who presented an allegorical interpretation of the myth to Socrates.

102. Wordplay abounds in this passage. Here *pithos* (jar) is linked to *pithanon* (persuadable) and *peistikon* or (Dodds's conjecture) *peiston* (persuaded).

103. Another pun: *anoētous amuētous*. The latter word, "uninitiated," comes from the verb *muēō* (to initiate); it may also remind of *muō* (to close, see note at 480c) and hence suggest "leaky" or "unstopped."

104. I have followed Sauppe's emendation; Dodds's emendation would make this clause: "seeing its intemperate and leaky character."

105. Another etymology or pun: *Haidou* (genitive of *Haidēs*) and *aides* (from *a-idein*, not to see). This derivation of "Hades" is implied also at *Phaedo* 81c.

most wretched, and they carry water to their perforated jar with another such perforated thing, a sieve. And therefore he means—as the
 493c one who spoke to me said—that the sieve is the soul; he likens the soul of the thoughtless to a sieve since their soul is perforated, seeing that it cannot hold anything on account of disbelief and forgetfulness. Now probably these things are somewhat strange, but they make clear what I wish to point out to you—if I am somehow able—so as to persuade you to change your position, and instead of the insatiable and intemperate life to choose the orderly life, sufficient and
 493d satisfied with the things that are ever at hand. Well, am I persuading you somewhat and do you change to the position that the orderly are happier than the intemperate? Or even if I tell myths of many other such things, will you nonetheless not change anything?

CAL.: What you've just said is truer, Socrates.

SOC.: Come then, I'll tell you another likeness from the same school¹⁰⁶ as the one just now. Consider whether you are saying something of the following sort about the life of each, the moderate and the intemperate man: if each of two men had many jars, and those of the
 493e one were healthy and full (one of wine, one of honey, one of milk, and many others of many other things), and the sources of each of these things were scarce and difficult and to be supplied for oneself with many difficult toils; the one man, then, having filled his jars, conducts no more supplies to them nor gives any heed, but as regards these he is at rest; for the other man, just as for that one, the sources can be supplied but are difficult, the vessels are perforated and decayed, and he is always compelled, night and day, to fill them, or he
 494a suffers the utmost pains. Such being the life of each, are you really saying that the life of the intemperate man is happier than that of the orderly man? In saying these things, do I somewhat persuade you to grant that the orderly life is better than the intemperate, or do I not persuade you?

CAL.: You do not persuade me, Socrates. For that man who has filled his jars no longer has any pleasure; indeed this, as I was saying just now, is living just like a stone, when one has been filled up, no longer
 494b either rejoicing or feeling pain. But living pleasantly consists in this, in keeping as much as possible flowing in.

106. *Gymnasion*, a place for (naked) bodily exercise; conversation and instruction might also take place there.

soc.: So if much flows in, is it then necessary that what goes away also be much, and that there be some big holes for the outflowings?

CAL.: Yes, certainly.

soc.: You in turn mean some life of a stone-curlew,¹⁰⁷ though not indeed of a corpse or a stone. Now tell me: do you mean something such as to be hungry and, being hungry, to eat?

CAL.: I do.

494c soc.: And to be thirsty and, being thirsty, to drink?

CAL.: That's what I mean, and also that one who has all the other desires and can fulfill them, rejoices and lives happily.

soc.: Well done, best of men! Now continue just as you began, and do not hold back through shame. Nor, it would appear, must I hold back through shame. Now first say whether it is living happily for one who is tickled and itches to have an ungrudging amount of scratching and to continue scratching his life long?

494d CAL.: How strange you are, Socrates, and simply¹⁰⁸ a popular speaker!

soc.: Surely that's why, Callicles, I astounded Polus and Gorgias and made them feel ashamed; but don't you be astounded or feel ashamed, for you are courageous. But only answer.

CAL.: Well then, I do assert that he who scratches, too, would live pleasantly.

soc.: So if pleasantly, then also happily?

CAL.: Certainly.

494e soc.: Is this the case if he should scratch only his head—or what more shall I ask you? See, Callicles, what you will answer if someone asks you in succession all the things that follow on these. And the culmination of such things as these, the life of catamites,¹⁰⁹ is this not terrible and shameful and wretched? Or will you dare to say that these men are happy, if they have an ungrudging amount of what they want?

CAL.: Are you not ashamed, Socrates, to lead the arguments into such things?

soc.: What, is it I who lead them there, nobly born man? Or is it he who asserts without restraint, just like that, that those who rejoice—

107. Dodds notes that the *charadrios* is a bird of messy habits and uncertain identity; the scholiast writes that it excretes at the same time that it eats.

108. *Atechnōs*: see note at 491a.

109. A *kinaidos*, catamite, is the passive object of homosexual love and intercourse. *Kephalaion*, "culmination," puns on *kephalē*, "head."

495a in whatever way they may rejoice—are happy, and who does not distinguish among the pleasures what sort are good and what sort bad? But tell us further now, whether you assert that the pleasant and the good are the same, or whether there is some one of the pleasant things that is not good?

CAL.: In order that the speech should not contradict me, if I assert that they are different, I assert that they are the same.

SOC.: You are corrupting the first speeches, Callicles, and you would no longer be sufficiently examining with me the things that are, if you're going to speak contrary to how things seem in your own opinion.

495b CAL.: And you too, Socrates.

SOC.: Well then, I too am not doing what's correct, if indeed I do this, nor are you. But, blessed man, observe that the good is not this, rejoicing in all ways; for these many shameful things, just now hinted at, are manifest consequences, if this is the case, and many other things too.

CAL.: As you think, at any rate, Socrates.

SOC.: Do you really, Callicles, contend mightily for these things?

CAL.: I do.

495c SOC.: Shall we then put our hand to this argument as if you are serious?

CAL.: Certainly, very much so.

SOC.: Come then, since that's how it seems, determine for me the following things. Do you perhaps call something knowledge?

CAL.: I do.

SOC.: And weren't you just now saying that along with knowledge there is a certain courage?

CAL.: That's what I was saying.

SOC.: So then, weren't you saying that these are two, on the grounds that courage is something different from knowledge?

CAL.: Very much so.

SOC.: And what about this? Do you say pleasure and knowledge are the same or different?

495d CAL.: Different, I suppose, you wisest man.

SOC.: And you say courage is different from pleasure?

CAL.: How could it not be?

SOC.: Come now, let us remember these things: that Callicles the Acharnian¹¹⁰ asserted that pleasant and good are the same, and that

110. With the formality of some legal proclamation, Socrates states the deme (political subdivision of Athens) to which Callicles belongs; he responds in kind.

knowledge and courage are different both from each other and from the good.

CAL.: And does Socrates of Alopecce not agree with us on these things, or does he agree?

495e SOC.: He does not agree; nor do I think that Callicles will either, when he himself looks on himself correctly. For tell me, don't you think that those who are doing well have suffered the opposite experience¹¹¹ than those who are doing badly?

CAL.: I do.

SOC.: So then if these things are opposed to each other, must one of necessity be in the same condition concerning them that one is in concerning health and sickness? For a human being is not, I suppose, healthy and sick at the same time, nor is he released at the same time from health and sickness.

CAL.: What do you mean?

496a SOC.: For example, consider it in regard to any part of the body you wish, taking it by itself. May a human being be sick in his eyes, which has the name ophthalmia?

CAL.: To be sure.

SOC.: And he is not, I suppose, also healthy at the same time in respect to them, is he?

CAL.: In no way whatsoever.

SOC.: What about when he is released from ophthalmia? Is he then released from health of the eyes too and does he end up having been released from both at the same time?

CAL.: Not in the least.

496b SOC.: For I think that becomes something amazing and irrational, doesn't it?

CAL.: Very much so.

SOC.: Rather, I think, he gets and loses each in turn?

CAL.: I say so.

SOC.: And so in the same way as regards strength and weakness?

CAL.: Yes.

SOC.: And speed and slowness?

CAL.: Certainly.

SOC.: And as regards good things and happiness and their opposites, bad things and wretchedness—does he get each in turn and lose each in turn?

111. *Pathos*: see note at 481c.

CAL.: Quite so, doubtless.

496c SOC.: Then if we find some things that a human being is released from and that he has at the same time, clearly these would not be the good and the bad. Do we agree on these things? And answer when you have considered it very well.

CAL.: I do agree, extraordinarily so.

SOC.: Come then—to the things agreed on earlier. You were speaking of being hungry: did you mean this is pleasant or painful? I mean being hungry, by itself.

CAL.: I say painful; but the hungry man's eating is pleasant.

496d SOC.: I do too; I understand. But then being hungry itself is painful, or isn't it?

CAL.: I say so.

SOC.: And so then is being thirsty?

CAL.: Very much so.

SOC.: Shall I then ask still more, or do you agree that all need and desire are painful?

CAL.: I agree, so don't ask.

SOC.: So be it. Do you not then assert that the thirsty man's drinking is pleasant?

CAL.: I do.

SOC.: So then the "thirsty" in what you are saying is, I suppose, feeling pain?

496e CAL.: Yes.

SOC.: And drinking is both fulfillment of need and pleasure?

CAL.: Yes.

SOC.: So then you are speaking of rejoicing during the drinking?

CAL.: Very much indeed.

SOC.: When one is thirsty, that is.

CAL.: I say so.

SOC.: Feeling pain?

CAL.: Yes.

SOC.: Do you then perceive the consequence, that you are saying that the man feeling pain rejoices at the same time, when you speak of the thirsty man's drinking? Or does this not come into being at the same time in relation to the same place—whether of soul or of body, as you wish? For, I think, it makes no difference. Are these things so, or not?

CAL.: They are.

soc.: But surely you do assert that it is impossible for the man who is
 497a doing well to do badly at the same time.

cal.: I do assert it.

soc.: And you have agreed that it is possible for the man suffering pain to rejoice.

cal.: So it appears.

soc.: To rejoice, therefore, is not to do well nor is to suffer pain to do badly, so that the pleasant comes to be different from the good.

cal.: I don't know what sophisms you are making, Socrates.

soc.: You know, but you are being coy,¹¹² Callicles; advance still further into what's ahead.

cal.: Why do you keep on with such silly talk?

497b soc.: So that you may know how wise you are to admonish me. Does not each of us stop being thirsty and being pleased by drinking at the same time?

cal.: I don't know what you are saying.

gor.: Don't, Callicles; but answer for our sake too, so that the arguments may be brought to an end.

cal.: But Socrates is always like this, Gorgias. He asks small things, of little worth, and refutes them.

gor.: But what difference does it make to you? It is not at all your honor involved here,¹¹³ Callicles. Submit to Socrates' refuting however he wishes.

497c cal.: Then ask these small and narrow things of yours, since that's how it seems good to Gorgias.

soc.: You are a happy one, Callicles, to have been initiated in the great things before the small;¹¹⁴ I did not think it was righteous.¹¹⁵

112. The verb *akkizein* (to feign indifference or stupidity, to be coy) comes from *Akko*, a proverbially stupid woman.

113. This meaning of this phrase is uncertain. It might mean, as Dodds and several others think, "it is not for you to estimate their value"; but I find it rather unlikely that Callicles would simply accept this latter statement from Gorgias without objection.

114. To be initiated into the greater Eleusinian Mysteries required that one had been previously initiated into the lesser (at Agrae). These mysteries had to do with tales about Demeter, the goddess of grain, and her daughter, Kore, Plutus, the god of wealth and of the underworld, and Persephone; with the sowing and harvest of grain; and with death, rebirth, and the possibilities of human immortality. At *Symposium* 210a, Diotima (in Socrates' account of what he learned from her about *erōs*, love) mentions levels of initiation into mysteries.

115. *Themiton*, from *themis*: what has been set down, established, made law, especially by usage or custom; often connoting divine sanction no less than human.

Answer, then, where you left off, whether each of us does not stop being thirsty and pleased at the same time.

CAL.: I say so.

soc.: So then does he cease from hungers and the other desires and from pleasures at the same time?

CAL.: That is so.

497d soc.: So then does he cease from pains and pleasures at the same time?

CAL.: Yes.

soc.: But surely he does not cease from good things and bad things at the same time, as you agreed; but do you not agree now?

CAL.: I do; so what then?

soc.: This, that good things do not turn out to be the same as pleasant, my friend, nor bad things as painful. For he ceases from some at the same time, and from others not, since they are different. How then would pleasant things be the same as good or painful as bad?

Now if you wish, look at it in the following way too; for I think it
497e isn't agreed on by you in this way. Observe: do you not call good men good because of the presence of good things, just as you call them beautiful in whom beauty is present?

CAL.: I do.

soc.: What about this? Do you call fools and cowards good men? That's not what you did recently, but rather you meant the courageous and intelligent; or don't you call these men good?

CAL.: Yes I do, certainly.

soc.: What about this? Have you ever seen a thoughtless child rejoicing?

CAL.: I have.

soc.: And have you never yet seen a thoughtless man rejoicing?

CAL.: I think I have; but what of it?

498a soc.: Nothing; just answer.

CAL.: I have seen it.

soc.: What about this: a man who has intelligence feeling pain and rejoicing?

CAL.: I say so.

soc.: Which rejoice and feel pain more, the intelligent or the fools?

CAL.: I think there's not much difference.

soc.: Well, even this is enough. And have you seen a cowardly man in war?

CAL.: How could I not have?

- soc.: Well then, when the enemies went away, which seemed to you to rejoice more, the cowardly or the courageous men?
- 498b cal.: To me, both seemed to rejoice; the former perhaps more,¹¹⁶ or if not, about equally.
- soc.: It makes no difference. But the cowards, then, rejoice too?
- cal.: Very much so.
- soc.: And the fools, it would appear.
- cal.: Yes.
- soc.: And as the enemies advanced, do only the cowards feel pain, or do the courageous ones too?
- cal.: Both.
- soc.: Equally, then?
- cal.: The cowards perhaps feel more.
- soc.: And do they not rejoice more when the enemies go away?
- cal.: Perhaps.
- soc.: So then the foolish and the intelligent and the cowardly and the courageous men feel pain and rejoice about equally, as you assert,
- 498c and the cowardly more than the courageous?
- cal.: I say so.
- soc.: But surely the intelligent and courageous men are good, and the cowardly and foolish are bad?
- cal.: Yes.
- soc.: Therefore the good and the bad rejoice and feel pain about equally?
- cal.: I say so.
- soc.: So are the good and the bad therefore about equally good and bad? Or are the bad still more good?
- 498d cal.: But by Zeus, I do not know what you are saying!
- soc.: Don't you know that you are asserting that the good are good because of the presence of good things, and the bad because of bad things? And that the good things are pleasures and the bad things pains?
- cal.: I do.
- soc.: So then are the good things, pleasures, present for those who rejoice, if indeed they are rejoicing?
- cal.: Indeed, how could they not be?

116. The manuscripts give "To me, both rather; or if not, about equally." I have translated Dodds's plausible addition to restore what seems to have dropped out.

SOC.: So then with good things present, are those who rejoice good?

CAL.: Yes.

SOC.: What about this? Are not the bad things, pains, present for those who suffer pain?

CAL.: They are present.

498e SOC.: And do you assert that the bad are bad because of the presence of bad things? Or do you no longer assert it?

CAL.: I do.

SOC.: Are they who rejoice therefore good, and they who suffer pain bad?

CAL.: Certainly.

SOC.: Those who do so more, more; and less, less; and about equally, about equally?

CAL.: Yes.

SOC.: So are you then asserting that the intelligent and the fools and the cowards and the courageous rejoice and feel pain about equally, or even the cowards still more?

CAL.: I am.

SOC.: Now sum up in common with me what follows for us from the things agreed on; for they say that it is fine to speak of and to examine the fine things even two or three times. We assert that the intelligent and courageous man is good, don't we?

499a

CAL.: Yes.

SOC.: And that the fool and coward is bad?

CAL.: Certainly.

SOC.: And in turn that the man who rejoices is good?

CAL.: Yes.

SOC.: And that the man who suffers pain is bad?

CAL.: Necessarily.

SOC.: And that the good man and the bad man suffer pain and rejoice equally, and perhaps the bad man even more?

CAL.: Yes.

SOC.: So does the bad man then become good and bad equally with the good man, or even more good? Don't these things follow, as well as those earlier ones, if someone asserts that pleasant and good things are the same? Aren't these things necessarily so, Callicles?

499b

CAL.: I have been listening to you for a long time now, Socrates, and agreeing right along, pondering that, if someone is joking and grants you anything, you are pleased with it and hold on to it just as young

lads do. As if you thought that I or any other human being did not consider some pleasures better and others worse!

499c soc.: Oh! Oh! Callicles, how all-cunning¹¹⁷ you are and how you treat me like a child—at one time claiming that things are this way, and at another time that the same things are otherwise, deceiving me! And yet I did not think at the beginning that I was to be deceived by you voluntarily, since you were my friend. But now I have been played false, and it looks like it's necessary for me—according to the old saying—to make do with what is present and to accept from you this that is given. What you are now saying, as it would appear, is that there are some pleasures that are good, and some that are bad. Isn't that it?

499d CAL.: Yes.

soc.: So are the beneficial ones therefore good, and the harmful ones bad?

CAL.: Certainly.

soc.: And those that produce something good are beneficial, and those that produce something bad are bad?

CAL.: I say so.

soc.: Do you then mean such pleasures as we were just now speaking of in regard to the body, in eating and drinking—now of these, are those good that produce health in the body, or strength or some
499e other virtue of the body, while those that produce the opposites of these things are bad?

CAL.: Certainly.

soc.: So then is it the same way with pains too? Are some useful and some base?

CAL.: How could they not be?

soc.: So must one then choose and practice the useful pleasures and pains?

CAL.: Certainly.

soc.: But not the base ones?

CAL.: Clearly.

soc.: For if you remember, it seemed to us—to Polus and me—that one must do all things for the sake of good things. Is this the way it seems to you too, that the end of all actions is the good, and that all

117. *Panourgos*, literally, a doer of everything, viz., someone who will stop at nothing, even a daring criminal.

500a other things must be done for the sake of it but not it for the sake of the other things? Do you too vote with us, making a third?

CAL.: I do.

SOC.: One must therefore do both other things and pleasant things for the sake of good things, but not good ones for the sake of pleasant.

CAL.: Certainly.

SOC.: Does it then belong to every man to pick out from the pleasant things what sort are good and what sort bad, or is an artful¹¹⁸ man needed for each thing?

CAL.: An artful man.

SOC.: Let us then recollect the things that I happened, again, to be saying to Polus and Gorgias. For I was saying, if you remember, that
 500b some contrivances exist that go as far as pleasure, prepare this very thing alone, and ignore the better and the worse; and some that come to know what is good and what is bad. And among those concerned with pleasures I put the experience (not art) of cookery, and among those concerned with the good, the medical art. And by the god of Friendship,¹¹⁹ Callicles, do not yourself think that you ought to joke with me, nor answer whatever you happen upon contrary to how
 500c things seem to you, nor in turn take things from me as if I were joking. For you see that our speeches are about this—and what would a human being who had even a little intelligence be more serious about than this? That is, in what way one must live, whether the life to which you urge me on, doing these things of a man, speaking among the people and practicing rhetoric and acting in politics in this way in which you now act in politics; or this life in philosophy; and in what respect it can be that this life differs from that one. Perhaps then
 500d it is best, as I attempted a while back, to distinguish, and having distinguished and agreed with each other, if these lives are indeed two and distinct, to examine in what they differ from each other and which of them one ought to live. Now perhaps you do not yet understand what I am saying.

CAL.: Indeed not.

SOC.: Well, I shall speak to you more clearly. Since you and I have agreed that some good exists and some pleasant exists, and the pleas-

118. A more natural translation today would be “an expert,” but I have kept “artful” to make clear the connection with the issue of what is and what is not an art (see note at 447c).

119. *Pros Philiou*, “by [?] of Friendship,” is probably short for “by Zeus the god of Friendship” (an oath used at *Phaedrus* 234e).

ant is different from the good, and there is a certain caring for each of them and a contrivance for their possession, the pursuit of the pleasant and the pursuit of the good—but first either assent or not to this very thing. Do you assent?

CAL.: I say so.

soc.: Come then, agree with me on what I was saying to these men too, if what I was saying seemed true to you then. I was saying, I suppose, that cookery does not seem to me to be an art, but experience; whereas medicine, I said, examines the nature of him of whom it takes care and the cause of the things that it does, and it has a reasoned account to give of each of these things, medicine does. But the other—its care is wholly with pleasure, and it proceeds altogether artlessly toward pleasure, without having examined to any degree the nature of pleasure or the cause, all in all irrationally,¹²⁰ making virtually no distinct enumeration, but by routine and experience saving only the memory of what usually comes about, by which then it also provides pleasures. First consider, therefore, whether these things seem to you to be stated in a sufficient manner, and whether certain other such occupations concerned with the soul too seem to exist, some of which are artful, having a certain forethought for the best as regards the soul, and some of which make light of this, but have examined—in this case as in the former—only the soul's pleasure, and in what way it may come into being for the soul, whether it is a better or a worse one of the pleasures, neither examining nor caring about anything but gratification alone, whether better or worse. For to me, Callicles, they do seem to exist, and I for one assert that this sort of thing is flattery, concerned with body and soul and anything else of whose pleasure someone takes care while having no consideration of better and worse. Now do you set down the same opinion with us about these things or do you speak against it?

CAL.: Not I; but I grant it, so that your argument may be brought to an end and I may gratify Gorgias here.

soc.: And is this the case concerning one soul, but not two or many?

CAL.: No, but also concerning two or many.

soc.: Is it then possible to gratify them in crowds at the same time, without any consideration of the best?

120. *Alogōs*, “irrationally” or without a reasoned account; paralleling *atechnōs*, “artlessly” or without art.

CAL.: I think so.

SOC.: Are you then able to say what the pursuits are that do this? Or rather if you wish, as I ask, say yes when it seems to you to be one of these, and say no when it doesn't. First let us consider flute playing.¹²¹ Doesn't it seem to you to be such a one, Callicles—to pursue only our pleasure and to give heed to nothing else?

CAL.: It seems so to me.

SOC.: Is it then likewise with all of this sort, such as cithara playing in competitions?

CAL.: Yes.

SOC.: And how about the training of choruses and the composition of dithyrambs?¹²² Don't you find it plainly of this sort? Or do you think that Cinesias the son of Meles paid any heed to how he would say something such that the hearers would become better from it, rather than how he was to gratify the mob of spectators?

CAL.: It's clearly this, Socrates, at least as regards Cinesias.

SOC.: What about his father, Meles? Did he in your opinion sing to the cithara with a view to the best? Or did that man not even sing with a view to the most pleasant? For his singing used to pain the spectators. But consider now whether all singing to the cithara and composing of dithyrambs have not in your opinion been discovered for the sake of pleasure.

CAL.: It seems so to me.

SOC.: And the august¹²³ and amazing one itself, the composing of tragedy—toward what is it serious? As it seems to you, is its attempt and seriousness only to gratify the spectators, or also if something is pleasant and gratifying to them but base, to fight not to say this, and if something happens to be unpleasant and beneficial, to fight to say and sing this, whether they rejoice or not? In which way in your opinion has the composing of tragedies been prepared?

121. I use the traditional translation, "flute," of *aulos*, which in fact was an ancient reed instrument rather more like an oboe or clarinet. Dodds notes that the instrument was used for musical accompaniment in the theater but was "especially associated with the wilder sort of evening parties . . . and with the ecstatic dancing practised in the Dionysiac and similar cults." In the *Republic* (399d), Socrates excludes it from the guardians' education on the grounds that, since it can imitate all modes (*harmoniai*), it is used to imitate both good and bad characters and tempers.

122. Originally choral odes to Dionysus, dithyrambs underwent considerable evolution over the years. The best-known composers of dithyrambs from the earlier (than, e.g., Cinesias's) generation were Simonides, Pindar, and Bacchylides.

123. *Semnos* means revered, august, holy, solemn, pompous. Often ironic in Plato, I have most often rendered it "solemn."

CAL.: This at least is clear, Socrates—that it strives rather for pleasure
502c and gratifying the spectators.

SOC.: And were we just now saying, Callicles, that such a thing is flattery?

CAL.: Certainly.

SOC.: Come then, if someone stripped off the tune, rhythm, and meter from every poetic composition, would what is left turn out to be anything other than speeches?

CAL.: Necessarily so.

SOC.: So are these speeches then spoken before a big mob and before the people?

CAL.: I say so.

SOC.: The poetic art, therefore, is a certain popular speaking.

502d CAL.: So it appears.

SOC.: Would it then be a rhetorical popular speaking? Or don't the poets seem to you to speak rhetorically in the theaters?

CAL.: They seem to, to me.

SOC.: Now therefore we have found a certain rhetoric directed toward such a people as consists of children together with women and men, both slave and free—a rhetoric that we do not altogether admire, for we assert that it is a flattering one.

CAL.: Certainly.

SOC.: So be it. Now what about the rhetoric directed toward the Athenian people and the other peoples of free men in the cities—what in
502e the world is it, in our view? Do the rhetors in your opinion always speak with a view to the best, aiming at this, that because of their speeches the citizens shall be as good as possible? Or do these men too strive for gratifying the citizens and, for the sake of their own private interest, make light of the common interest, and associate with the peoples as if with children, trying only to gratify them, and giving no
503a heed to whether they will be better or worse because of these things?

CAL.: What you are asking now is no longer simple: for there are some who care about the citizens when they say what they say, and there are also such as you say.

SOC.: That is enough. For if this thing too¹²⁴ is double, one part of it anyway would be flattery and shameful popular speaking, and the

124. The "too" would have to refer back, it seems, to the twofold arts-flatteries set forth earlier; understanding *kai* differently (as Dodds suggests) would yield the meaning "if this thing is indeed double."

other would be noble: making preparations for the citizens' souls to be as good as possible and fighting to say the best things, whether
 503b they will be more pleasant or more unpleasant to the hearers. But this rhetoric you have never yet seen; or if you can mention one of the rhetors as such, why haven't you declared to me too who he is?

CAL.: But by Zeus I cannot mention anyone for you—not of the current rhetors, at any rate.

SOC.: What then? Can you mention one of the ancients through whom the Athenians, worse at an earlier time, are judged to have become better, after he began to practice popular speaking? For I do not know who this man is.

503c CAL.: What? Do you not hear that Themistocles turned out to be a good man, and Cimon, and Miltiades, and Pericles himself, who recently came to his end, whom you too have heard?¹²⁵

SOC.: If, at any rate, Calicles, true virtue is what you were saying earlier—satisfying both one's own and others' desires. But if it is not this, but what we were compelled to agree in the subsequent argument—to fulfill those desires that, when sated, make a human being
 503d better, but not those that make him worse (and this would be a certain art)—then I, for one, don't know how I could mention anyone of these as such a man.

CAL.: But if you do a fine job of seeking, you will find.¹²⁶

SOC.: Then let's examine it in this calm manner and see if anyone of these turned out to be such a one. Well then, won't the good man,
 503e who speaks with a view to the best, say what he says not at random but looking off toward something? Just as all the other craftsmen look toward their work when each chooses and applies what he applies, not at random, but in order that he can get this thing he is working on to have a certain form. For example, if you wish to look

125. Gorgias had earlier mentioned Themistocles and Pericles; see note at 455e. Pericles died in the second year of the Peloponnesian War, 429 B.C. Miltiades led the Athenian troops that won the great victory in the first Persian War at Marathon in 490. His son, Cimon, worked with Aristides (see 526b) to found the Delian League (forerunner to the Athenian Empire) in the latter stages of the second Persian War, 478–477; he was opposed by the more democratic party (led eventually by Pericles).

126. Various editors deal variously with problems in the manuscripts here, regarding both what is said and who says it. I have followed Burnet's version (J. Burnet, *Platonis Opera* [Oxford Classical Text], vol. 3 [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903]. Dodds argues for a different emendation, which would yield this: "soc.: . . . (and this seemed to us to be a certain art)—Can you say that some one of these was such a man?—CAL.: I, for one, don't know how I could say so.—soc.: But if you do a fine job of seeking, you will find. Then let's examine it. . . ."

at painters, house builders, shipwrights, all the other craftsmen—whomever of them you wish—see how each man puts down each thing that he puts down into a certain arrangement, and furthermore
 504a compels one thing to fit and harmonize with another, until he has composed the whole as an arranged and ordered thing. And indeed the other craftsmen, and those concerned with the body, of whom we were just now speaking, trainers and doctors—they order the body, I suppose, and arrange it together. Do we agree that this is so or not?
 CAL.: Let this be so.

SOC.: Then a house that happened to have arrangement and order would be useful, and one lacking arrangement would be degenerate?

CAL.: I say so.

SOC.: And the same way for a ship too?

504b CAL.: Yes.

SOC.: Now, do we say so about our bodies as well?

CAL.: Certainly.

SOC.: And what about the soul? Will it be useful when it happens to have lack of arrangement, or arrangement and a certain order?

CAL.: From what preceded, it is necessary to agree on this too.

SOC.: What then is the name of that which, in the body, comes into being from arrangement and order?

CAL.: You probably mean health and strength.

504c SOC.: I do. And now, in turn, what about that which arises within the soul from arrangement and order? Try to find and state the name, just as for the former case.

CAL.: Why don't you say it yourself, Socrates?

SOC.: Well, if that's more pleasant for you, I shall say. And if in your opinion I speak finely, say yes, and if not, refute and don't yield. For in my opinion the body's arrangements have the name "the healthy," from which health comes into being in it, and the rest of the body's virtue. Are these things so or not?

CAL.: They are.

504d SOC.: The soul's arrangements and orderings, on the other hand, have (in my opinion) the name "the lawful" and "law," whence they become both lawful and orderly; and these things are justice and moderation. Do you say yes or no?

CAL.: Let it be.

SOC.: That rhetor, then—the artful and good one—will look toward these things, when he applies to souls both the speeches that he

speaks and all actions; and when he gives something as a gift, he will give it, and when he takes something away, he will take it away, always directing his mind toward how he may get justice to come into being in the citizens' souls and injustice to be removed, moderation to arise within and intemperance to be removed, the rest of virtue to arise within and badness to depart. Do you grant it or not?

504e CAL.: I grant it.

SOC.: Indeed what advantage is there, Callicles, in giving to a sick body in a degenerate condition either much and the most pleasant food, or drink, or anything else, which would benefit him not a bit more, or indeed to the contrary, according to the just argument, even less? Are these things so?

505a CAL.: Let them be so.

SOC.: For I do not think it profits a human being to live with a degenerate condition of body; for in this way he must necessarily live degenerately too. Or isn't it so?

CAL.: Yes.

SOC.: And so then doctors for the most part allow a healthy man to satisfy his desires, such as when hungry to eat as much as he wishes or when thirsty to drink, but they never, one might almost say, allow a sick man to fill up on the things he desires. Do you too grant this?

CAL.: I do.

505b SOC.: And does not the same way, best of men, hold as regards the soul? As long as it is base—being thoughtless, intemperate, unjust, and impious—one must keep it away from desires and not permit it to do any other things than those from which it will be better. Do you say yes or no?

CAL.: Yes, I say.

SOC.: For thus, I suppose, it's better for the soul itself.

CAL.: Certainly.

SOC.: Now then, is keeping it away from the things it desires punishing?

CAL.: Yes.

SOC.: Being punished, therefore, is better for the soul than intemperance,¹²⁷ as you were thinking just now.

505c CAL.: I don't know what you are saying, Socrates, so ask someone else.

127. On the relation of these words *kolazesthai*, to be punished, and *akolasia*, intemperance, see note at 476a.

soc.: This man here does not abide being benefited and suffering for himself this thing that the argument is about, being punished.

cal.: Nor do I care at all about the things you are saying, and I answered you these things as a favor to Gorgias.¹²⁸

soc.: So be it. What then shall we do? Are we breaking off the argument in the middle?

cal.: You yourself will know.

soc.: Well, they say that it is not righteous¹²⁹ to abandon even myths
505d in the middle, but one must put a head on, so that it not go around without a head. So answer the remaining things too, so that our argument may get a head.

cal.: How violent you are, Socrates. But if you're persuaded by me, you'll bid this argument farewell,¹³⁰ or else you'll converse with someone else.

soc.: Who else is willing then? Let us not abandon the argument there, incomplete.

cal.: Couldn't you go through the argument yourself, either speaking by yourself or answering yourself?

soc.: So that Epicharmus's saying may come to pass for me: "What
505e two men were saying beforehand, I, being one," may become sufficient for.¹³¹ Yet it may well be most necessary. Now then let's do it this way; I, at any rate, think we all must be lovers of victory in regard to knowing what is the true and what is falsehood as regards the things we are talking about. For it is a common good for all that it become
506a manifest. I shall therefore go through in speech how it seems to me to be; and if I seem to any one of you to agree with myself on things that are not, you must take me up on it and refute. For I, at any rate, do not say what I say with knowledge,¹³² but I am seeking in common with you—so that, if one who disputes me is manifestly saying something, I shall be the first to grant it. I say these things, however,

128. *Charin* with a genitive is a standard way of saying "for someone's sake." But *charis* means grace, pleasure, gratitude, favor; it is the root of *charizesthai*, "to gratify," and *chairein*, "to rejoice." Here Callicles is gratifying not himself but Gorgias.

129. *Themis*, see second note at 497c.

130. A more literal translation of *eaō auto chairein*, "bid it farewell," would be "let it rejoice"; see the first note at 505c.

131. Epicharmus, a Sicilian writer of nonchoral comedies, is mentioned as the consummate poet of comedy in Plato's *Theaetetus* 152e.

132. Dodds accepts here the words *panu ti* found in one manuscript; the translation might then be: "with quite complete knowledge."

if it seems that the argument should be carried through to a conclusion; but if you don't wish it, then let's bid it farewell and go away.

GOR.: But it doesn't seem to me, Socrates, that we should go away yet; rather, you should finish going through the argument. And it appears to me that it seems so to the others too. I myself, in any case, wish to hear you go through the remaining things by yourself.

506b soc.: Well certainly, Gorgias, I myself too—I would with pleasure have gone on talking with Callicles here, until I had given him back the speech of Amphion for the speech of Zethus. But since you, Callicles, are not willing to join in carrying through the argument to a conclusion, then listen to me and interrupt, if something I say does not seem fine to you. And if you thoroughly refute me, I shall not be annoyed with you as you were with me, but you will be inscribed with me as the greatest benefactor.

CAL.: Speak, good man, and finish it yourself.

506d soc.: Then listen to me take up the argument from the beginning. Are the pleasant and the good the same thing? No, not the same, as Callicles and I agreed. Must the pleasant be done for the sake of the good or the good for the sake of the pleasant? The pleasant for the sake of the good. And is the pleasant this thing through which we are pleased, when it comes to be present; and is the good that through which we are good, when it is present? Certainly. But surely we are good—both we and all other things that are good—when some virtue comes to be present? It seems necessary to me, Callicles. Now then, the virtue of each thing—of implement, body, soul too, and every living being¹³³—does not come to be present in the finest manner simply at random, but by arrangement, correctness, and art, which has been assigned to each of them; are these things so? I say
506e yes. Then is the virtue of each thing something that has been arranged and ordered by arrangement? I should say so. Is it therefore a certain order arising in each thing—each thing's own order—that makes each of the beings good? It seems so to me, at least. Then is a soul too that has its own order better than a disordered one? Necessarily. And surely the one that has order is orderly? How would it not be? And
507a the orderly one is moderate? Very necessarily. The moderate soul is therefore good. I don't have any other things to say against these, Callicles my friend; but if you do, teach us.

CAL.: Speak, good man.

133. Or one could translate "every animal."

soc.: I say, then, that if the moderate soul is good, the one that suffers the opposite to the moderate is bad; and this would be the foolish and intemperate soul.¹³⁴ Certainly. And surely the moderate man would do fitting things concerning both gods and human beings; 507b for he who does unfitting things would not show moderation. These things are necessarily so. And surely he who does fitting things concerning human beings would do just things; and concerning gods, pious things; and he who does just and pious things must of necessity be just and pious. These things are so. And indeed, of necessity, courageous as well. For it is not the part of a moderate man either to pursue or to flee things that are not fitting, but to flee and to pursue what he ought—affairs, human beings, pleasures, and pains—and to 507c abide and be steadfast wherever he ought. So it is very necessary, Callicles, that the moderate man as we have described him, since he is just, courageous, and pious, must be the completely good man; and the good man must do what he does well and nobly; and the man who does well must be blessed and happy, while the base man who does badly must be wretched. And this would be the one in an opposite condition to the moderate men—the intemperate man, whom you were praising.

I therefore lay down these things in this way and I assert that they 507d are true. And if they are true, he who wishes to be happy must, it would seem, pursue and practice moderation, and each of us must flee intemperance as fast as his feet will carry him; and one must most of all prepare to have no need of punishment, but if oneself or some other of one's own—whether private man or city—needs it, one must apply the just penalty and punish, if he is to be happy. This in my opinion is the goal looking toward which one must live, straining to direct all one's own and the city's things toward this, that justice and moderation will be present for him who is to be blessed; thus 507e must one act, not allowing desires to be intemperate and striving to satiate them—an endless evil, living a robber's life. For such a one would be dear friend neither to another human being nor to god; for he would be unable to share in common, and he in whom there is no community would not have friendship. The wise¹³⁵ say, Callicles, that 508a heaven, earth, gods, and human beings are held together by com-

134. *Sōphrōn*, "moderate," has a wide range of meanings: temperate, self-controlled, of sound mind, sensible; hence Socrates here proposes two opposites.

135. Dodds argues persuasively that the scholiast and Olympiodorus correctly identify these wise men as Pythagoreans.

munity, friendship, orderliness, moderation, and justness; and on account of these things, comrade, they call this whole an order,¹³⁶ not disorder and intemperance. You, however, seem to me not to turn your mind to these things, wise though you are about them, but it has escaped your notice that geometrical equality¹³⁷ has great power among both gods and human beings, whereas you think one must practice taking more; for you have no care for geometry. So be it:

508b either this argument must be refuted for us, to show that it is not by the possession of justice and moderation that the happy are happy and by the possession of evil that the wretched are wretched; or else if this argument is true, we must examine what the consequences are. All those earlier things follow, Callicles, upon which you asked me if I was speaking seriously, when I said that one must accuse oneself, one's son, and one's comrade, if he is doing an injustice, and one must use rhetoric for this. And the things you thought Polus granted because of shame were therefore true, that doing injustice is as much

508c worse than suffering injustice as it is more shameful; and he who is to be correctly rhetorical must therefore be just and a knower of the just things, which in turn Polus said Gorgias agreed to through shame.

These things being so, let us examine what in the world it is that you reproach me for and whether what is said is fine or not: that I am unable, then, to help either myself or anyone of my friends or relatives, or to save them from the greatest dangers, but am at the mercy of whoever wishes, just as those without civic rights¹³⁸ are at the

508d mercy of whoever wants—whether he wishes to strike me a crack on the jaw (to use this youthful phrase from your speech), to take away my possessions, to expel me from the city, or—the ultimate—to kill me; and to be in this condition is of all things most shameful, as your argument goes. But my argument now—while it has already been said many times, nothing prevents its being said again as well: I deny, Callicles, that being unjustly struck a crack on the jaw is most

508e shameful, or having my body or my purse cut; rather, striking and cutting me and my things unjustly is more shameful and worse; and

136. *Kosmos*.

137. Such is a literal translation; we would tend to say "proportionate equality" or "proportionality." Aristotle develops this notion in detail to describe distributive justice (*Nicomachean Ethics* 5.1131a10–b22).

138. This word, *atimos*, was translated "unhonored" at 486c; see note there.

for that matter stealing, enslaving, housebreaking, and in short doing any injustice whatsoever to me and my things is both worse and more shameful for him who does injustice than for me who suffer injustice. These things, above there in the earlier arguments, manifestly appeared to us in this way that I am saying, and they are held down
 509a and bound—if it is possible to say something rather rude—with iron and adamant arguments, as it would seem, at any rate; and if you (or someone more youthful than you) do not loosen them, he who says something different from what I am now saying won't be able to say anything fine. For my speech is always the same: I do not know how these things are, but of those people I fall in with, as now, no one who says something different is able not to be ridiculous. So
 509b then, again, I put it that these things are so. And if so, and the greatest of evils is injustice for the doer of injustice and a still greater evil than this greatest one—if that's possible—is for the doer of injustice not to pay the just penalty, what help would it be, for not being able to provide himself with which, a human being would be ridiculous in truth? Would it not be that one which turns the greatest harm away from us? It is very necessary that this be the most shameful help not to be able to provide for oneself or for one's friends and relatives; second would be help against the second evil, third against the third,
 509c and so on. As the greatness of each evil naturally is, so too is the nobility of being able to help against each and the shame of not being able. Is it otherwise or thus, Callicles?

CAL.: Not otherwise.

SOC.: Then of these two, doing injustice and suffering it, we assert that doing injustice is the greater evil, suffering injustice the lesser.
 509d By preparing what, then, would a human being help himself, so as to have both of these benefits—that of not doing injustice and that of not suffering injustice? Is it power or wish? This is how I mean it: if he does not wish to suffer injustice, will he not suffer injustice; or if he has prepared a power of not suffering injustice, will he not suffer injustice?

CAL.: This at least is clear: it is if he has prepared power.

SOC.: Now what about doing injustice? If he does not wish to do injustice, is this sufficient—for he will not do injustice—or against this
 509e thing too must one prepare a certain power and art, as he will do injustice if he does not learn and practice them? Why haven't you answered me this very thing, Callicles? Were Polus and I in your opin-

ion correctly compelled in the earlier speeches to agree, or were we not, when we agreed that no one does injustice wishing to do so, but all doers of injustice do so involuntarily?

510a CAL.: Let this be so for you, Socrates, so that you may bring the argument to a conclusion.

SOC.: One must therefore prepare a certain power and art against this too, as it would seem, in order that we not do injustice.

CAL.: Certainly.

SOC.: What in the world, then, is the art for the preparation of suffering no injustice or as little as possible? Examine if it seems to you what it does to me. For to me, it seems to be the following: one must either rule in the city oneself—or even rule as tyrant—or else be a comrade of the existing regime.¹³⁹

510b CAL.: Do you see, Socrates, how ready I am to praise, if something you say is fine? This thing you have said is altogether fine in my opinion.

SOC.: Now consider whether the following thing I say seems good to you too. In my opinion, each man is the friend of another to the greatest possible degree, who the ancient and wise said was the friend: like to like. Doesn't it seem so to you too?

CAL.: It does to me.

510c SOC.: So then, where a savage and uneducated tyrant is ruler, if someone in the city is much better than this man, the tyrant I suppose would fear him, and he could never become this man's¹⁴⁰ friend with his whole mind.

CAL.: These things are so.

SOC.: Nor, if someone were much lowlier, would he; for the tyrant would despise him and would never be serious about him as toward a friend.

CAL.: These things are also true.

SOC.: As friend of such a one, then, there remains worth speaking of

139. *Politeia*, "regime" or political system or constitution (the title of Plato's *Republic*), for Plato as for Aristotle is chiefly determined by who rules. *Hetairos*, which has the broad meaning "comrade," companion, friend, has also the specific meaning of political partisan, fellow member of a political faction or party.

140. That is, the tyrant's. There is some difficulty here and in the next exchange as to whether *houtos* ("this man") refers to the tyrant or the other, and whether *philos* ("friend") has the active ("friend") sense or the passive (dear, object of friendship). An alternative interpretation would be "and [the tyrant] could never become this man's friend with his whole mind."

only that man who, being of the same character and praising and
 510d blaming the same things, is willing to be ruled and to be submissive
 to the ruler. This man will have great power in that city; to this man
 no one will rejoice to do injustice. Isn't this how it is?

CAL.: Yes.

soc.: Then if some one of the young in that city thought, "In what
 way might I have great power, and no one might do me an injustice?"
 this, it would seem, is the path for him: immediately from youth to
 accustom himself to rejoice and to be distressed at the same things as
 the master, and to make preparations so as to be as much as possible
 like that man. Isn't it so?

CAL.: Yes.

soc.: So for this man, then, not suffering injustice and having great
 510e power (as your argument goes) in the city will have been accom-
 plished.

CAL.: Certainly.

soc.: Will not doing injustice, then, be accomplished too? Or far from
 it, if he is like the ruler who is unjust and if he has great power along-
 side this man? Wholly to the contrary, I think at any rate, in this way
 his preparation will be aimed at being able to do as much injustice as
 possible and not to pay the just penalty when he does it. Won't it?

CAL.: It appears so.

511a soc.: So then the greatest evil will befall him, when he is degenerate
 and maimed in his soul through imitation of the master and through
 power.

CAL.: I don't know how you twist the arguments up and down each
 time, Socrates. Or don't you know that this man who imitates will
 kill that one who does not imitate, if he wishes, and confiscate his
 property?

511b soc.: I know, good Callicles, unless I'm deaf—since I hear you and
 just now Polus many times and almost all others in the city; but you
 now hear from me: that he will kill, if he wishes, but it will be a base
 man killing a noble and good one.

CAL.: Isn't this exactly the infuriating thing?

soc.: Not for him who has intelligence, as the argument indicates. Or
 do you think a human being ought to make preparations for living as
 511c long a time as possible and to practice those arts that always save us
 from dangers—like the one you are bidding me to practice, rhetoric
 that brings us through safely in the law courts?

CAL.: Yes, by Zeus, and I'm counseling you correctly!

SOC.: What about this, you best of men? Does the science of swimming seem to you to be an august one?

CAL.: No, by Zeus! Not to me, at any rate.

- SOC.: And yet it too saves human beings from death, when they fall into something of the sort where this science is needed. But if this one
 511d seems to you to be small, I shall speak to you of one greater than this, the pilot's art, which saves not only souls¹⁴¹ but also bodies and possessions from the ultimate dangers, just as rhetoric does. And this art is unostentatious and orderly, and does not assume an august bearing¹⁴² on the grounds that it accomplishes something splendid. But, having accomplished the same things as the forensic art,¹⁴³ if it
 511e saves you coming hither from Aegina, it demands two obols, I think; and if from Egypt or the Pontus, for this great benefaction, having saved all that I was speaking of just now—oneself, children, possessions, and womenfolk—disembarking them in the harbor, it demands at the very most two drachmas. And the man himself who has the art and has accomplished these things, stepping off alongside the sea and the ship, walks around with a modest bearing. For he knows, I think, how to calculate that it is unclear which ones of those sailing with him he has benefited by not letting them be thrown into the sea
 512a and which ones he has harmed, knowing that he disembarked them no better than what they were like when they embarked, in respect to either their bodies or their souls. He therefore calculates thus: if someone possessed by great and incurable sicknesses of the body has not drowned, this man is wretched not to have died and has received no benefit from him; it therefore cannot be that, if someone has many incurable sicknesses in what is held in higher honor than the body, the soul, this man should live and he the pilot will help him by sav-
 512b ing him either from the sea or from a law court or from any other place whatsoever. Rather, he knows that it is not better for the degenerate human being to live, for he must necessarily live badly.

141. We would normally say "lives," of course. As the principle of life, *psychē* can sometimes mean being alive or life.

142. Irwin's note points out that some terms used here remind of the description of non-arts like cosmetic (464c, 465b) and apply with particular propriety to "an elaborate, figurative rhetorical style" (Terence Irwin, *Plato; Gorgias* [Translated with Notes] [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979].

143. *Dikanikē*, similar to but perhaps with more contemptuous overtones (as at *Republic* 405a) than *dikastikē*, "the judge's art" at 520b.

For these reasons it is not the convention for the pilot to affect an august air, even though he saves us, nor, you amazing man, for the engineer,¹⁴⁴ who can sometimes save us no less than the general, not to mention the pilot, or anyone else; for there are times when he saves whole cities. He does not seem to you to be on the level of the forensic speaker? Yet if he wished, Callicles, to say the things that you do, making his business out to be august, he would bury you with speeches, saying and exhorting that you must become engineers, since the other things are nothing; for he would have a sufficient argument. But you nonetheless despise him and his art, and you would label him an engineer as if in reproach, and you would not be willing to give your daughter to his son or yourself to take his daughter for your son. Yet on the basis of the things for which you praise your own affairs, by what just argument do you despise the engineer and the others of whom I was speaking just now? I know that you would say you are better and of better ancestry. But if the better is not what I say, but virtue is simply this, saving oneself and one's own property—of whatever sort one happens to be—your blame of the engineer, of the doctor, and of all the other arts that have been produced for the sake of saving us, becomes ridiculous. But, you blessed man, see if the noble¹⁴⁵ and the good are not something other than saving and being saved. For the true man, at any rate, must reject living any amount of time whatsoever, and must not be a lover of life.¹⁴⁶ Rather, turning over what concerns these things to the god and believing the women's saying that no man may escape his destiny, he must investigate what comes after this: In what way may he who is going to live for a time live best? Is it by making himself like that regime in which he lives, and should you therefore now become as much as possible like the Athenian people, if you are to be dear friend to it and to have great power in the city? See if this is profitable for you and for me, you demonic man, so that we shall not suffer what they say the Thessalian women who draw down the moon suffer: our choice of this power in the city will be at the cost of the things dearest to us.¹⁴⁷ And

144. *Mēchanopoios*: more literally, "maker of devices."

145. *Gennaios*, usually translated "nobly born."

146. Literally, "of soul"; see first note at 511d.

147. Thessaly, an area of Greece north of Attica, was considered an area especially endowed with witches. Witches, it was believed, often paid for the acquisition of their power through losing a family member or some faculty, like sight.

if you think any human being at all will impart to you a certain art
 513b such as to make you have great power in this city while being unlike
 the regime, whether for better or for worse, as it seems to me, you are
 not taking counsel correctly, Callicles. For you must be not an imita-
 tor but like these men in your very own nature, if you are to achieve
 something genuine in friendship with the Athenian people—and
 yes, by Zeus, with the son of Pylilampes to boot! So then, whoever
 will turn you out most like these men will make you skilled in poli-
 tics and in rhetoric, as you desire to be skilled in politics. For each
 513c group of men rejoice at speeches said in accord with their own char-
 acter and are annoyed at those of an alien character—unless you
 say something else, dear head.¹⁴⁸ Do we say anything against these
 things, Callicles?

CAL.: In some way, I don't know what, what you say seems good to
 me, Socrates; but I suffer the experience of the many—I am not alto-
 gether persuaded by you.

soc.: Yes, for love¹⁴⁹ of the people, Callicles, which is present in your
 soul, opposes me. But if we investigate these same things often and
 513d better, perhaps you will be persuaded.¹⁵⁰ Well then, remember that
 we said there are two means of preparing for taking care of each
 thing, body and soul: one associates with the one for the sake of plea-
 sure, with the other for the sake of the best, not yielding as a favor but
 fighting. Weren't these the things we were defining then?

CAL.: Certainly.

soc.: The one aiming at pleasure, then, happens to be ignoble and
 nothing other than flattery; isn't it?

513e CAL.: Let it be so for you, if you wish.

soc.: And is the other's aim that what we are taking care of, whether
 it happens to be body or soul, shall be as good as possible?¹⁵¹

CAL.: Certainly.

148. On this curious mode of address, see *Phaedrus* 234d and note there.

149. The word is *erōs*; the related verb (participial form) was used in 481d. Elsewhere in this dialogue, words involving "love" have translated *phil-* (e.g., "love of victory" at 457e). In the *Phaedrus*, where *erōs* is much discussed, I have also used "love" and indicated with footnotes where "love" translates one of the *phil-* words.

150. The manuscripts have the adverb *isōs*, "perhaps," oddly placed in this sentence. I follow Ast and others in moving it. Dodds considers it a gloss; if that is correct, one must drop the softening "perhaps" from Socrates' assertion.

151. Arguing that this adds nothing to what was already agreed to at d4; Dodds proposes the addition of *gennaïotera* so that the sentence would read: "Is the other one nobler, whose aim is. . . ."

soc.: Must we therefore put our hand to the city and the citizens in this way, to take care of them, making the citizens themselves as good as possible? For surely without this, as we found earlier, there
 514a is no advantage in applying any other benefaction, unless the understanding of those who are going to get either many possessions or rule over others or any other power is noble and good. Should we put it that this is the case?

CAL.: Certainly, if it's more pleasant for you.

soc.: Then if, Callicles, intending to act publicly in political affairs, we urged each other on to building—to the greatest buildings, whether of walls or dockyards or sacred temples—would we have to
 514b examine ourselves and inquire first whether we know the art or do not know it, that is, the art of building, and from whom we learned it? Would we have to do this or not?

CAL.: Certainly.

soc.: So would this in turn be second: whether we have ever built any building privately, either for someone of our friends or our own, and whether this building is beautiful or ugly? And if we consider
 514c and find that our teachers have been good and well spoken of, and that many beautiful buildings have been built by us with our teachers and many private buildings by us after we left our teachers—these being our circumstances, it would belong to us, as people who have intelligence, to proceed to public works. But if we could display no teacher of ours, and either no building or many worthless ones, surely thus it would be foolish, I suppose, to put our hand to public works and urge each other on to these. Should we assert that these
 514d are correct statements or not?

CAL.: Certainly.

soc.: Then is this how it is for all things? For example, if, putting our hand to public practice, we urged each other on as being adequate doctors, I suppose I should examine you and you me: "Well then, by the gods, what is the bodily condition of Socrates himself in regard to health? Or has anyone else yet been released from sickness by Socrates, whether slave or free?" And I think I should consider other
 514e things of this sort about you. And if we found no one who had become better in regard to his body because of us—neither foreigner nor townsman, neither man nor woman—by Zeus, Callicles, would it not in truth be ridiculous for human beings to proceed so far in folly as, before making many things in private practice however we

happen to, correcting many, and exercising ourselves adequately in the art, to attempt to learn pottery on the wine jar, as this saying goes,¹⁵² and to attempt to be in public practice ourselves and urge on other men of this sort? Would it not seem to you to be thoughtless to act thus?

CAL.: It would to me.

515a SOC.: Now then, you best of men, since you are yourself just now beginning to do the city's business and urge me on and reproach me for not doing it, shall we not examine each other: "Well then, has Callicles yet made anyone of the citizens better? Is there someone who was base before—unjust, intemperate, and foolish—and has become noble and good because of Callicles—whether foreigner or townsman,
515b slave or free?" Tell me, if someone questions you closely about these things, Callicles, what will you say? What human being will you say you have made better through intercourse with you? Do you shrink from answering, if indeed there is some work of yours, while you are still a private man, before you put your hand to public practice?

CAL.: You are a lover of victory, Socrates.

SOC.: But I am not asking from love of victory, but truly wishing to know what in the world is the way you think you ought to act in politics among us. Can it be that, as you enter upon the city's business,
515c you will then take care of anything else for us but that we citizens be as good as possible? Or have we not agreed many times already that the political man must do this? Have we agreed or not? Answer! We have agreed—I shall answer for you. Accordingly, if this is what the good man must prepare for his own city, remember now and tell me whether those men of whom you were speaking a little earlier still
515d seem to you to have been good citizens—Pericles, Cimon, Miltiades, and Themistocles.

CAL.: They do to me.

SOC.: So if indeed they were good, then it is clear that each of them made the citizens better instead of worse. Did they do so or not?

CAL.: Yes.

SOC.: So then, when Pericles began to speak in the people's assembly, were the Athenians worse than when he made his final speeches?

CAL.: Perhaps.

152. A wine jar was a large and difficult work of pottery; the beginner should start with smaller and simpler objects. Socrates refers to this same saying in the *Laches* at 187b, in a context involving education of the young.

soc.: There is no "perhaps" about it, best of men, but a necessity, from the things agreed on, if indeed that man was a good citizen.

515e CAL.: So what of it?

soc.: Nothing; but in addition to this tell me the following, if the Athenians are said to have become better because of Pericles, or, quite the opposite, to have been corrupted by him. For I at any rate hear these things, that Pericles made the Athenians lazy, cowardly, babbling, and money lovers, when he first brought them into the state of mercenaries.¹⁵³

CAL.: You hear these things, Socrates, from the men with cauliflower ears.¹⁵⁴

soc.: But the following things are no longer what I hear, but what I distinctly know, and you do too: that at first Pericles was well reputed, and the Athenians voted no shameful judgment in condemnation of him, at the time when they were worse. But after they had
516a become noble and good through him, toward the end of Pericles' life, they voted a condemnation of him for theft, and came close to sentencing him to death, clearly on the grounds that he was base.¹⁵⁵

CAL.: So what? Was Pericles bad on account of this?

soc.: A caretaker of asses, horses, or oxen, at any rate, who was of this sort, would seem to be bad, if when he took them over, they neither kicked nor butted nor bit him, but then he brought them forth doing
516b all these things through savageness. Or doesn't any caretaker whatsoever of any animal whatsoever seem to you to be bad who, having taken them over gentler, brings them forth more savage than he took them over? Does it seem so or not?

CAL.: Certainly, so that I may gratify you.

soc.: Now then gratify me by answering this too: is a human being too one of the animals or not?

CAL.: How could he not be?

soc.: Well then, did Pericles take care of human beings?

153. Pericles introduced payment for service on juries and the council (also pay for soldiers and sailors), thus making the Athenian regime more democratic.

154. "Cauliflower ears" is Dodds's translation; more literally, "with broken ears." Certain aristocratic or oligarchic Athenians affected a pro-Spartan taste, which included fondness for boxing and the like. See Socrates' discussion at *Protagoras* 342b.

155. The ironical rhetorical tone of this indictment should perhaps remind us of Polus's earlier indictment of Archelaus. The accounts in Thucydides and Plutarch suggest that Socrates exaggerates here, and Socrates does not mention that the Athenians repented soon after and restored Pericles to office (Thucydides 2.65.4).

CAL.: Yes.

516c soc.: What then? Shouldn't they, as we recently agreed, have become more just instead of more unjust through him, if indeed he took care of them as someone good in political affairs?

CAL.: Certainly.

soc.: Well then, are the just gentle, as Homer said?¹⁵⁶ What do you say? Not so?

CAL.: Yes.

soc.: But surely he showed them forth more savage than they were when he took them over—and that against himself, against whom he would have wished it least.

CAL.: Do you wish that I agree with you?

soc.: If, that is, the things I'm saying seem true to you.

CAL.: Then let them be so.

soc.: So, if more savage, then more unjust and worse?

516d CAL.: Let it be so.

soc.: Therefore Pericles was not good in political affairs, from this argument.

CAL.: You, at any rate, say not.

soc.: By Zeus, so do you, from the things you agree on! But tell me once more about Cimon. Didn't these men he was caring for ostracize him, so that they would not hear his voice for ten years?¹⁵⁷ And didn't they do these same things to Themistocles, and add on the
516e penalty of exile? And didn't they vote to throw Miltiades, of Marathon fame, into the pit, and were it not for the president,¹⁵⁸ he would have fallen in? And yet if these men were good, as you assert, they would never have suffered these things. It cannot be, can it, that good charioteers in the beginning do not fall from the chariots, but that when they have cared for the horses and have themselves become better charioteers, then they fall out? These things are not so either in chariot driving or in any other work; or does it seem so to you?

156. On several occasions (e.g., *Odyssey* 6.120) Homer uses the phrase *hubristai te kai agrioi oude dikaioi*, "wanton and savage and not just" as opposed to loving strangers and being of god-fearing mind. (On *hubris*, wanton outrage, see *Phaedrus* 238a.)

157. Ostracism was not even supposed necessarily to result from misconduct. (The most notorious example of unjust ostracism is doubtless that of Aristides the Just.) Cimon was ostracized in 461 after an unsuccessful attempt to intervene in Sparta's Messenian War. According to Plutarch's *Life of Cimon* 17, he was recalled soon afterwards.

158. *Pyrtanis*. At 473e Socrates referred to his tribe as presiding; this president's success in saving Miltiades contrasts with Socrates' failure to save the generals after Arginusae.

CAL.: Not to me.

517a soc.: The earlier arguments, therefore, were true, it would appear, that we know no one in this city who has become a good man in political affairs.¹⁵⁹ You agree that there is no one among those of today, and moreover from the earlier ones you pick out these men; but they have been plainly revealed to be equal to those of today, so that if these men were rhetors, they used neither the true¹⁶⁰ art of rhetoric—or they would not have fallen out—nor the flattering one.

CAL.: But it is nevertheless far from being the case, Socrates, that any-
517b one of those today has ever accomplished such works as anyone you wish of these men has accomplished.

soc.: You demonic man, I don't blame these men either—that is, not in their being servants of the city; indeed in my opinion they became more skilled in service than those of today, at any rate, and more capable of supplying the city with the things it desired. But as to leading desires in a different direction and not yielding, persuading and forcing them toward the condition in which the citizens were to be
517c better, those earlier men excelled these in nothing, one might almost say; yet this is the one work of a good citizen. But I agree with you that those earlier men were more terribly clever than these at supplying ships, walls, dockyards, and many other such things. You and I, then, are doing a laughable thing in the arguments; for in the whole time that we have been conversing, we haven't stopped always being carried around to the same thing and ignoring what we are, each of us, saying. So I think, at any rate, you have many times agreed and un-
517d derstood that this occupation concerned both with the body and with the soul is indeed a certain double one, and that the one is skilled in service, by which it is possible to supply food if our bodies are hungry, drink if they are thirsty, clothing, bedding, and shoes if they are cold, and other things for which bodies come into a state of desire. And I speak to you on purpose through the same likenesses, so that you may thoroughly understand more easily. For the one skilled at supplying these things is either the retailer or importer or craftsman
517e of some one of these same things—baker, cook, weaver, cobbler, or

159. In the *Meno* (93a), by contrast, Socrates asserts that in his opinion Athens has had men good in political affairs; he uses as examples Themistocles, Aristides, and Pericles. Socrates cites Pericles as wise in political matters in the *Protagoras* (320a) and as perhaps the most perfect of rhetors in the *Phaedrus* (269e–270b).

160. Or truthful, *alēthinos*; cf. the true (or truthful) city in the *Republic* 372e.

leather dresser. Being of such a sort, it is nothing amazing that he seems, to himself and to the others, to be the caretaker of the body, and thus to everyone who does not know that besides all these there is a certain gymnastic and medical art, which is really the care for the body and which fittingly rules all these arts and uses their works, because of its knowing what is useful and base among foods or drinks

518a for the body's virtue, while all these others are ignorant. It is for this reason that these other arts are slavish, servile, and illiberal as regards their occupation with the body, and the gymnastic art and medical art are, in accordance with what is just, mistresses of these. Well then, at one time you seem to me to understand that these same things in fact obtain for the soul as well, when I am saying so, and you agree as if you know what I mean; but a little later you come along and say that

518b there have been human beings who were noble and good citizens in the city, and when I ask who, you seem to me to put forward, concerning political affairs, human beings of a very similar sort as if, when I asked about gymnastic matters who have been or are good caretakers of bodies, you said to me in all seriousness that these men, Thearion the baker, Mithaicus who has written on Sicilian cookery, and Sarambus the retailer, have been amazing caretakers of bodies—

518c one preparing amazing loaves, another food, and the other wine.

So perhaps you would become infuriated if I said to you: "Human being, you understand nothing about gymnastic. You are telling me of human beings who are servants and provisioners of desires but understand nothing noble and good about them. If so they happen to do, they fill up and fatten human beings' bodies, are praised by them,

518d and will destroy in addition even their original flesh. And they in turn through inexperience will not charge those who feasted them with being responsible for the sicknesses and the loss of their original flesh; but whoever happen to be in their presence and give some counsel then, when a long time later the former satiety has come to them bringing sickness (since the satiety came about without what is healthy)—these are the ones they will charge, blame, and do some evil, if they are able, whereas they will extol those former ones who

518e were responsible for the evils." And now you, Callicles, are doing something most similar to this: you are extolling human beings who feasted these ones sumptuously on the things they desired. And they say that those men made the city great; but that it is swollen and festering with sores underneath on account of those ancient men, they

- 519a do not perceive. For without moderation and justice they have filled up the city with harbors, dockyards, walls, tribute, and such drivel; so then when that access of weakness comes, they will charge the counselors then present, but will extol Themistocles, Cimon, and Pericles, the ones responsible for the evils. And perhaps they will attack you, if you don't beware, and my comrade Alcibiades, when they are
- 519b losing to destruction, in addition to the things they acquired, the original things as well—despite your not being responsible for the evils, though perhaps responsible as accessories.

And indeed there's a thoughtless thing that I now see coming to pass and that I hear about the ancient men. For when the city handles one of the political men as a doer of injustice, I perceive them becoming infuriated and bitterly complaining that they are suffering terrible things; having done many good things for the city, they are in fact being unjustly destroyed by it, as their argument goes. But the

519c whole thing is a lie; for not one leader of a city would ever be unjustly destroyed by that city which he leads. For probably the same thing happens with both those who make themselves out to be political men and those who make themselves out to be sophists. For the sophists, though wise in other respects, do this strange business: for, claiming to be teachers of virtue,¹⁶¹ they often accuse their students of doing them injustice—depriving them of wages and not giving

519d back other gratitude, though the students have been well treated by them. And what business could be more irrational than this argument, that human beings who have become good and just, have been delivered from injustice by the teacher, and possess justice, do injustice with this that they do not have? Isn't this in your opinion a strange thing, comrade? Truly, Callicles, you compelled me to engage in popular speaking, by not being willing to answer.

CAL.: And you were the one who could not speak, unless someone answered you?

- 519e soc.: It would appear so. Now, to be sure, I am drawing my speeches out at length, since you are unwilling to answer me. But, good man, tell me, by the god of Friendship, isn't it irrational in your opinion for one who claims to have made someone good to find fault with him, because, having become and being good through him, he afterwards is base?

161. Gorgias, in contrast, did not make this claim. See note at 457b. But see also 460a–461.

CAL.: In my opinion, at least.

SOC.: So then, do you hear those who claim to educate human beings to virtue saying such things?

520a CAL.: I do. But what would you say about human beings that are worth nothing?

SOC.: And what would you say about those who, claiming to lead the city and take care that it will be as good as possible, turn around and accuse it of being most base, whenever they happen to? Do you think that these differ in any respect from those? The sophist and the rhetor, you blessed man, are the same thing, or pretty close and nearly resembling, as I was saying to Polus. Through ignorance, however,

520b you think that the one, rhetoric, is something altogether fine, while you despise the other; but in truth sophistry is as much finer than rhetoric as legislation is finer than the judge's art and gymnastic than medicine. And I for one thought that the popular speakers and sophists were actually the only ones for whom there was no place to find fault with this thing that they themselves educate, on the grounds that it is base toward them; or else by this same argument they must at the same time accuse themselves as well, because they conferred no benefit on those whom they say they benefit. Isn't this the case?

520c CAL.: Certainly.

SOC.: And in all likelihood, I suppose, for them only is there a place to give away a benefaction without a wage, if what I was saying is true. For someone benefited with another benefaction—for example, becoming swift because of a trainer—might perhaps deprive him of gratitude, if the trainer gave it away to him instead of contracting for a wage and getting the money as nearly as possible at the moment of giving him a share of swiftness; for it is surely not by slowness, I think, that human beings do injustice, but by injustice, isn't it?

520d

CAL.: Yes.

SOC.: So then if someone takes away this very thing, injustice, he has no fear of ever suffering injustice; but for him alone it is safe to give away this benefaction, if indeed someone is really able to make men good. Isn't it so?

CAL.: I say so.

SOC.: For these reasons therefore, it would appear, it is nothing shameful for a man to take money for giving the other kinds of counsels—such as about building or the other arts.

520e CAL.: It would appear so, at any rate.

soc.: But certainly about this action—in what way one might be as good as possible and govern his own household or city as well as possible—it is conventionally held to be shameful to refuse to give counsel, unless someone gives one money. Isn't it?

CAL.: Yes.

soc.: The cause, clearly, is this: it alone among benefactions makes him who is well treated desire to do good in return, so that it seems to be a fine sign, if the one who does good through this benefaction will be treated well in return; and if not, not.¹⁶² Is that the way it is with these things?

521a CAL.: It is.

soc.: Define for me, then, to which manner of caring for the city you are urging me on. Is it that of fighting with the Athenians so that they will be as good as possible, as a doctor would do, or as one who will serve and associate with them with a view to gratification? Tell me the truth, Callicles; for, just as you began being outspoken with me, you are just to end up saying what you think. Now too, speak well and in a nobly born manner.

CAL.: Well then, I say as one who will serve.

521b soc.: You are therefore urging me on to engage in flattery, you most nobly born man.

CAL.: If it's more pleasant for you to call it Mysian,¹⁶³ Socrates. Because if you will not do these things . . .

soc.: Don't say what you have said many times, that whoever wishes will kill me, so that I too will not in turn say that it will be a base man killing a good one; nor that he will confiscate whatever I have, so that I in turn won't say that, having confiscated he won't know how to use them, and just as he confiscated them from me unjustly, so too
521c when he has taken possession he will use them unjustly, and if unjustly, shamefully, and if shamefully, badly.

CAL.: How you seem to me, Socrates, to believe you would not suffer one of these things, on the grounds that you dwell out of the way and would not be brought into a law court by a human being who is perhaps altogether degenerate and lowly.

162. Protagoras, a rich Sophist, accepted whatever payment a student swore on oath was in his judgment the true value of the teaching he had received.

163. Proverbial words whose meaning, it appears, was something like "to call a spade a spade." A related phrase is "the last of Mysians," (*Theaetetus* 209b) apparently roughly equivalent to "the lowest of the low."

soc.: Then I am truly thoughtless, Callicles, if I don't think that in this city anyone may suffer anything that might happen. This, however,
 521d I know well: if I go before a law court about one of these dangers of which you are speaking, some base man will be my prosecutor—for no good¹⁶⁴ person would prosecute a human being who does no injustice—and it would be nothing strange if I should die. Do you wish me to tell you for what reason I expect these things?

CAL.: Certainly.

soc.: I think that with a few Athenians—so as not to say myself alone—I put my hand to the true political art and I alone of the men of today practice politics, inasmuch as it is not with a view to gratification that I speak the speeches that I speak on each occasion, but with
 521e a view to the best, not to the most pleasant; and since I am unwilling to do what you recommend—"these refined subtleties"—I won't have anything to say in the law court. The same argument applies to me that I was telling Polus: for I will be tried as a doctor accused by a cook would be tried among children. For consider what such a human being, caught in these circumstances, would say in defense, if someone accused him and said, "Boys, this man here has done many bad things to you yourselves; and he corrupts the youngest of you by
 522a cutting and burning; and he causes you to be at a loss by reducing and choking you, giving the most bitter draughts and compelling you to be hungry and thirsty—unlike me, who regale you sumptuously with many pleasant things of all sorts." What do you think a doctor, caught up in this bad situation, would have to say? Or if he told the truth, that "I did all these things, boys, in the interest of health," how great a clamor, do you think, would rise up from such judges? Wouldn't it be great?

CAL.: Perhaps.

soc.: One must think so, at any rate.¹⁶⁵ Don't you think he would be
 522b at a total loss as to what he should say?

CAL.: Certainly.

soc.: But I know I too would suffer an experience of this sort if I went before a law court. For I shall not be able to tell them about pleasures that I have furnished them, which they consider benefactions and

164. *Chrēstos*, elsewhere translated "useful," has a range of meanings: useful, serviceable, good, worthy, decent, kindly.

165. The manuscripts put these words in Callicles' previous reply; if that is correct, perhaps the "perhaps" should be deleted.

- benefits, whereas I envy neither those who supply them nor those to whom they are supplied; and if someone asserts either that I corrupt the younger ones by causing them to be at a loss or that I speak evil of the older ones by making bitter speeches either in private or in public, I shall not be able to say the truth, that "I say and do all these things justly, gentlemen judges"—to use *your* phrase for them¹⁶⁶—nor anything else. So that I shall probably suffer whatever may happen.
- CAL.: In your opinion, then, Socrates, is a human being in a fine state, when he's in such a condition in the city, powerless to help himself?
- SOC.: If, at any rate, he has that one thing, Callicles, which you have agreed on many times—if he has helped himself so as neither to have said nor to have done anything unjust as regards either human beings or gods. For this kind of helping oneself has been agreed on by us many times to be the strongest. If someone convicted me by refutation of being powerless to help myself or another with this kind of help, then I would be ashamed, whether refuted among many, among few, or alone by one man only, and if I should die because of this incapacity, I would be sorely vexed; but if I came to my end through lack of flattering rhetoric, I know well that you would see me bearing death easily. For no one fears dying itself, who is not all in all most irrational and unmanly, but he fears doing injustice; for to arrive in Hades with one's soul full of many unjust deeds is the ultimate of all evils. And if you wish, I am willing to tell you a rational account, that this is so.
- CAL.: Well, since you have finished the other things, finish this too.
- SOC.: Hear then, as they say, a very fine rational account, which you consider a myth, as I think, but I consider it a rational account; for I shall tell you the things I am going to tell as being true. For just as Homer says, Zeus, Poseidon, and Pluto divided the rule among themselves, after they took it over from their father.¹⁶⁷ Now in the time of Cronos there was the following law concerning human be-

166. In the *Apology*, Socrates addresses the large jury as "Athenian men"; as one might expect from this passage of the *Gorgias*, he uses "gentlemen judges" (more literally, "men judges") only to address the minority who voted for his acquittal (*Apology* 40a).

167. In the *Iliad*, 15.187–93, Poseidon, in anger at Zeus's command that he leave the fighting at Troy, refers to this division to justify his own title to equal standing with Zeus. Homer there uses the name Hades rather than Pluto. The term "take over" suggests ordinary inheritance. Socrates is silent here on the tale of violence against their father, Cronos, as told by Hesiod (*Theogony* 453–506 and 617 ff.), which he criticizes in the *Republic* 377e–378e and the *Euthyphro* 5e–6b.

ings, and it exists always and still to this day among the gods, that he
 523b among human beings who went through life justly and piously,
 when he came to his end, would go away to the islands of the blessed
 to dwell in total happiness apart from evils, while he who lived un-
 justly and godlessly would go to the prison of retribution and judg-
 ment, which they call Tartarus. In the time of Cronos and while Zeus's
 possession of rule was still new, the judges of these living men were
 themselves living, and passed judgment on that day on which the
 men were going to come to their end; and so the judgments were de-
 cided badly. So then Pluto and those in charge from the islands of the
 523c blessed went and said to Zeus that unworthy human beings were fre-
 quenting them in both places. So Zeus said, "Nay, I," he said, "shall
 stop this from coming to pass. For now the judgments are judged
 badly. For those on trial," he said, "are tried clothed; for they are tried
 living. Hence many," he said, "who have base souls are clothed in
 fine bodies, ancestry, and wealth, and when the trial takes place,
 many witnesses go with them to bear witness that they have lived
 523d justly; the judges, then, are driven out of their senses by these men,
 and at the same time they themselves pass judgment clothed as well,
 with eyes and ears and the whole body, like a screen, covering over
 their soul. All these things come in their way—both their own clothes
 and those of the men being tried. First, therefore," he said, "one must
 stop them from foreknowing their death, for now they foreknow it.
 523e Prometheus¹⁶⁸ has therefore already been told to stop this in them.
 Next, one must try them naked, without all these things; for they
 must be tried when they are dead. And he who decides the trial must
 be naked, dead, and must with his soul itself contemplate the soul it-
 self of each man immediately upon his death, bereft of all kinsfolk
 and having left all that adornment¹⁶⁹ behind on earth, so that the trial
 may be just. Knowing these things before you, I have therefore made
 524a my sons judges—two from Asia, Minos and Rhadamanthus, and one
 from Europe, Aeacus; so then, when they have come to their end,
 these ones will pass judgment in the meadow, at the fork in the road
 from which two roads lead, one to the islands of the blessed, the

168. In *Prometheus Bound* by Aeschylus, Prometheus, a master of devices, reports that he stopped mortals from foreseeing their doom by causing blind hopes to dwell within them, but these deeds along with his giving men fire and all arts were done against Zeus's will.

169. *Kosmos*.

other to Tartarus.¹⁷⁰ Rhadamanthus will try those from Asia, and Aeacus those from Europe; to Minos I shall give, as the privilege of age, to pass further judgment, when the other two are at a loss about something, so that the decision about the journey for human beings may be as just as possible.

These are the things, Callicles, that I have heard and believe to be
 524b true; and from these speeches I calculate that something of this sort follows. Death, as it seems to me, happens to be nothing other than the separation of two things, the soul and the body, from each other. When, therefore, they are separated from each other, each of them is in a condition not much worse than when the human being was alive, and the body has its own nature, the cares taken of it, and its
 524c sufferings all manifest. For example, if the body of someone still living was big either by nature or rearing or both, this man's corpse will be big too when he is dead, and if stout, stout too when he is dead, and thus with regard to other things; and if, again, he made a practice of letting his hair grow long, this man's corpse too will be long-haired. Again, if someone while alive was a rascal in need of a whipping and had the traces of blows—scars¹⁷¹—on his body, either from whips or other wounds, one can see that his body, when he has died, has these things. Or if someone's limbs were broken or distorted
 524d while he was alive, these same things will be manifest when he has died. In one speech: of such a sort as he prepared himself to be in regard to his body while he lived, all these things or many of them will be manifest for some time also when he has come to his end. Now this same thing, then, seems to me to hold for the soul as well, Callicles: all things are manifest in the soul, when it has been stripped naked of the body—both the things of nature and the sufferings that the human being had in his soul through the pursuit of each kind of business. So when they have arrived before the judge, those from
 524e Asia before Rhadamanthus, Rhadamanthus halts them and contemplates each one's soul, not knowing whose it is; but often, laying hold of the great king or some other king or potentate, he perceives that there is nothing healthy in the soul, but it has been severely whipped
 525a and is filled with scars from false oaths and injustice, which each ac-

170. The island of Crete, from which Minos and Rhadamanthus come, is counted as belonging to Asia. The word translated "fork in the road" is more literally "triple road."

171. The word translated "scar" in this passage, *oulē*, is part of the word *hupoulos*, translated "festering with sores underneath" at 518e and 480b.

tion of his stamped upon his soul, and all things are crooked from lying and boasting, and there is nothing straight on account of his having been reared without truth; and he sees the soul full of asymmetry and ugliness from arrogant power, luxury, wanton insolence,¹⁷² and incontinence of actions; and having seen it he sends it away dishonorably, straight to the prison, having come to which it is going to endure fitting sufferings.

- 525b It is fitting for everyone who is subject to retribution and is correctly visited with retribution by another either to become better and be profited or to become an example to others, so that others, seeing him suffer whatever he suffers, may be afraid and become better. And some there are who are benefited and pay the just penalty, by gods and human beings—those who err in making curable errors; nevertheless the benefit comes about for them through pains and griefs both here and in Hades, for it is not possible otherwise that
- 525c they be released from injustice. On the other hand, the examples come into being from those who have done the ultimate injustices and have become incurable¹⁷³ through such unjust deeds; and these men are no longer profited themselves, inasmuch as they are incurable, but others are profited who see these men suffering on account of their errors the greatest, most painful, and most fearful sufferings for all time, simply hung up there in the prison in Hades as examples—spectacles and admonitions to those of the unjust who are forever arriving. I assert that Archelaus too will be one of these, if what
- 525d Polus says is true, and whoever else is a tyrant of this sort. And I think that the majority of these examples, indeed, have come into being from tyrants, kings, potentates, and those who engage in the affairs of the cities; for these through having a free hand¹⁷⁴ make the greatest and most impious errors. And Homer too bears witness to these things, for he has represented those who pay retribution for all time
- 525e in Hades as kings and potentates—Tantalus, Sisyphus, and Tityus; but no one has represented Thersites,¹⁷⁵ or anyone else who was a

172. *Hubris*: see *Phaedrus* 238a.

173. Dodds provides a valuable observation: “incurables” occur also in the myths of the *Republic* and *Phaedo*, but in the *Phaedrus* myth all souls regain their wings eventually, and no eternal punishment is threatened in the *Laws*.

174. *Exousia* can mean power, authority, abuse of power, arrogance, magistracy or office, freedom. It was translated “arrogant power” at 525a, “freedom” at 461e.

175. Tantalus, Sisyphus, and Tityus are observed by Odysseus in *Odyssey* 11.576–600. Thersites, described as the ugliest man in the Greek expedition against Troy, spoke abusively

base private man, as held fast by great retributions on the grounds of being incurable (for I don't think he had a free hand to do so, and accordingly he was happier than those who did); for indeed, Callicles, 526a those human beings who become exceedingly base are also from among the powerful. Nothing, to be sure, prevents good men from coming into being even among these, and those who become such are exceedingly worthy of admiration; for it is difficult, Callicles, and worthy of much praise, that one who has come to have a very free hand to do injustice should pass through life justly. But a few such do come into being, seeing that both here and elsewhere men have come into being—and I think there will be in the future—who are noble 526b and good with respect to this virtue of justly managing whatever someone entrusts to them; one even became altogether well spoken of among the other Greeks as well, Aristides the son of Lysimachus;¹⁷⁶ but the majority of potentates, you best of men, become bad. So then as I was saying, when Rhadamanthus gets hold of some such man, he does not know anything else about him—neither who he is nor from whom he is descended—but only that he is someone base; and having perceived this, he sends him away to Tartarus, putting a mark on him indicating whether he seems to be curable or incurable; 526c and when he has arrived there, he suffers fitting things. Sometimes, beholding another soul that has lived piously and with truth—a private man's or someone else's, but mostly, as I for one assert, Callicles, a philosopher's who has done his own business and not been a busybody in life¹⁷⁷—Rhadamanthus admires it and sends it away to the islands of the blessed. And Aeacus too does these same things; each of them judges holding a staff. And Minos sits overseeing them, he 526d alone holding the golden scepter, as Homer's Odysseus says he saw him, "holding the golden scepter, dispensing right¹⁷⁸ to the dead."

So then I, Callicles, have been persuaded by these speeches, and I

against the leaders; Odysseus, admitting that Thersites is a clear-voiced public speaker (*agorētēs*), rebuked him and beat him with the scepter, to the general approbation of the Greek host (*Iliad* 2.211–77).

176. Aristides, usually further designated "the Just." See notes at 503c, 516d, and 517a.

177. One is reminded of the definition of justice stated in book 4 of the *Republic*: doing one's own things and not being a busybody (433a). *Polupragmosunē*, "being a busybody" or more literally "being busy with much," is perhaps on the way to *panourgia*, "doing everything" (see note at *Gorgias* 499b).

178. Or "giving judgments": *themisteuon*, derived from *themis* (right, judgment, law); see second note at 497c. The quotation is from *Odyssey* 11.569.

consider how I might show as healthy a soul as possible to him who decides the trial. Bidding farewell, then, to the honors that come from the many human beings, I shall try both to live and to die, when I die, practicing the truth and really being as good as I have power to be. And I urge on all other human beings as well, to the extent of my power—and to be sure I also urge you on in return¹⁷⁹—toward this life and this contest, which I assert is the one, instead of all the contests here; and I reproach you that you will not be able to help yourself, when you have the judgment and the trial of which I was speaking just now; but when you have come to that judge, the son of Aegina,¹⁸⁰ and when that one seizes hold of you and brings you in, you will be gaping and dizzy there no less than I here, and perhaps someone will dishonorably strike you a crack on the jaw and completely trample you in the mud.

Now then, perhaps these things seem to you to be told as a myth, like an old wives' tale, and you despise them; and it would be not at all amazing to despise them, if we were able to seek somewhere and find better and truer things than they. Now, however, you see that, though you are three, and are the wisest of the Greeks of today—you, Polus, and Gorgias—you are not able to prove that one should live any other life than this one, which is manifestly advantageous in that place too. But among so many speeches, the others are refuted and this speech alone remains fixed: that one must beware of doing injustice more than of suffering injustice, and more than everything, a man must take care not to seem to be good but to be so, both in private and in public; and if someone becomes bad in some respect, he must be punished, and this is the second good after being just—becoming so and paying the just penalty by being punished; and one must flee from all flattery, concerning both oneself and others, and concerning both few men and many; and one must use rhetoric thus, always aiming at what is just, and so for every other action.

Be persuaded, then, and follow me there where, having arrived, you will be happy both living and when you have come to your end, as the argument indicates. And let someone despise you as foolish and trample you in the mud, if he wishes—and yes, by Zeus, confidently let him knock you this dishonorable blow; for you will suffer

179. That is, in response to Callicles' different urging on of him.

180. The nymph Aegina bore Aeacus to Zeus.

nothing terrible, if you really are noble and good, practicing virtue. And after we have practiced in common thus, then at last, if it seems we ought, shall we apply ourselves to political affairs; or we shall take counsel on what sort of thing seems good to us then, when we are better at taking counsel than now. For it is shameful to be in the condition that we now appear to be in, and then to behave like youths as if we were something, when things never seem the same to us as regards the same things—and this as regards the greatest things. To such a degree of lack of education have we come! Let us then use the argument that has now revealed itself like a leader, which indicates to us that this way of life is best: to live and to die practicing both justice and the rest of virtue. Let us then follow this argument, and let us urge the others on to it, not to that one which you believe in and to which you urge me on; for it is worth nothing, Callicles.